

**West Suffolk Electric Vehicle
Policy Statement**

December 2022

Purpose of document

West Suffolk Council (WSC) recognises that electric vehicles (EVs) are becoming mainstream within our society and that the authority will need to play a part in the rollout of infrastructure to support this new technology.

This document sets out how WSC will interact with the various partners, stakeholders, residents, businesses, and the local community to make sure that there is a consistent approach from WSC moving forward and that our decision makers and representatives can clearly identify where and when decisions may be relevant to EVs.

The role of West Suffolk Council

In 2020, West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council (SCC) both declared a climate emergency and committed to being net zero carbon by 2030. The Environment and Climate Change Taskforce has set out key actions to reduce emissions in West Suffolk, which have been adopted by the West Suffolk Council Cabinet. The Suffolk Climate Emergency Plan, supported by Suffolk public sector leaders, has the decarbonisation of transport (including electrification) as a key priority. In addition, Suffolk County Council parking standards (2019) require new developments to be suitably equipped with EV charging equipment or designed to allow for future provision.

West Suffolk Council can play a vital role in facilitating the expansion of the charging network. This can be both through direct action, such as by setting up EV chargers in council owned car parks, as well as indirectly by working with partners – such as Suffolk County Council – as a community leader.

West Suffolk Council's approach

The council supports active travel and encourages residents to travel by walking, cycling and public transport wherever possible. These modes of transport are not only beneficial to the environment or have lower carbon emissions, but are also beneficial to public health. However, as West Suffolk is a predominantly rural community, car use will remain a key transport mode that many of our residents and businesses rely on.

Our approach is focused on supporting the rollout of public charge points in line with wider local transport and energy decarbonisation policies. The council will work with a variety of organisations and partner agencies to support the development of a comprehensive and accessible network that delivers on agreed sustainable outcomes.

The electric vehicle sector is becoming established and some major industry decisions, such as connection point types, are now established and unlikely to change. However, we recognise that the industry will continue to evolve over the coming years.

The council will adopt an agile approach to respond quickly to technological, market and socio-economic changes. The council will also identify and adopt innovative approaches to make sure that delivery is effective, and the infrastructure meets the needs of residents, businesses, communities and visitors.

Our key roles and responsibilities include:

- make sure clear ownership and resourcing of the planning and delivery of EV charging infrastructure rollout
- enable the expansion of reliable local charge points, accessible for residents, businesses, and visitors
- make sure internal processes for the installation of charge points (for example grant permissions) are efficient, fast and easy to navigate for those working with local authorities
- ensuring EV infrastructure is considered for new developments
- work closely in partnership with the private sector town, as well as Suffolk County Council, the parish councils and other public sector organisations, to coordinate activity
- work with charge point operators to rollout rapid charging.

West Suffolk Council's position statements

Position statement	Explanation
1. Monitor the use of electric vehicle charge points within West Suffolk car parks and help to deliver additional charge points where demand is required.	In most of the West Suffolk towns, WSC own and operate the majority of the car parking facilities that are used by town centre workers, shoppers, tourists and other leisure visitors. Town centre residents without off street parking may also use our car parks. The council will work with partners and make use of national grants and other funding sources, to help facilitate charge point rollout. We will aim to have charging 'hubs' with numerous charging points rather than dispersing charge points in multiple locations.
2. Where appropriate, work to install electric vehicle charge points at West Suffolk owned destinations, such as our country parks and leisure centres.	Where West Suffolk Council has direct ownership (for example, our country parks), the council have developed plans to increase the EV charging facilities.
3. Provide advice for independent leisure locations that wish to develop their EV charge points, when requested.	There may be occasions where destinations require technical advice, additional funding, or other support, but in general there does not appear to be a need for West Suffolk Council to intervene, as the market is delivering in this sector.
4. West Suffolk Council will work with charge point operators to deliver rapid charging facilities in all of our town centres.	There will be a need for rapid charging in our town centres to enable businesses, including taxis, to operate to full potential and to allow visitors or residents a convenient and local rapid charging opportunity. There are numerous charge point operators willing to invest, or part invest, in rapid charging facilities in council owned town centre car parks. West Suffolk Council will work with charge point operators to deliver rapid charging facilities in our town centres.

<p>5. West Suffolk Council will explore on-street residential charging opportunities where appropriate but only where alternative locations for charging hubs are not available.</p>	<p>With any on-street solution, such as lamppost mounted charge points, there are inherent complications. Although we will consider on-street charging provision, our preference will be for charging hubs in convenient long stay car parks as delivered under EV1.</p>
<p>6. West Suffolk Council will support Suffolk County Council in decisions involving private on-street residential charging.</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council as the local highway authority will be responsible for decisions over the installation of private on-street charging solutions, but West Suffolk Council will need to be involved as a key stakeholder to make sure consistent messaging to members of the public and other interested parties.</p>
<p>7. Suffolk County Council will lead on the rollout of EV charge points at community facilities in West Suffolk, but West Suffolk Council will provide local knowledge, advice and support.</p>	<p>Suffolk County Council have led on providing funding for EV charge points at community facilities, focusing on our rural communities' assets such as village halls. West Suffolk Council welcome SCC's efforts to support rural rollout and will continue to support their work in this area.</p>
<p>8. West Suffolk Council will signpost local businesses to appropriate funding sources for workplace EV charging infrastructure.</p>	<p>Where appropriate West Suffolk Council will act to signpost to relevant grants, where requested. The council will also link businesses to other council run schemes, such as our solar for business scheme, which could allow for cheaper on-site electricity generation.</p>
<p>9. West Suffolk Council will work to make sure that taxi drivers will be able to rely upon a robust public rapid charging network.</p>	<p>The council cannot install charge points at taxi ranks, nor earmark charging sites specifically for taxi drivers. However, we will continue to support taxi drivers in the transition to EVs through our Green Business Grant funding and through advice and guidance while working with our licensing colleagues.</p>
<p>10. West Suffolk Council will remain a key partner to Suffolk County Council in the decarbonisation of the bus network and support charging facilities at West Suffolk Council owned bus stations where appropriate.</p>	<p>The council will support the work of Suffolk County Council through SCCs Enhanced Bus Partnership with operators to deliver the National Bus Strategy. Where charging facilities are required at bus stations, West Suffolk Council will work to support the county council, subject to appropriate funding or business case.</p>
<p>11. West Suffolk Council will continue to develop new planning policies and guidance as required.</p>	<p>The National Planning Policy Framework, the Building Regulations and Suffolk Parking Standards all have requirements relating to EV charge points. As policies and regulations evolve, we will use the most</p>

<p>West Suffolk Council will continue to make sure that new development includes appropriate EV facilities.</p>	<p>appropriate routes to make sure that new development is suitably equipped with EV charge points.</p>
<p>12. West Suffolk Council will install charging facilities within its depots to allow for the transition of fleet cars and vans to EV.</p>	<p>As part of a wider £9m decarbonisation budget the council is seeking to purchase low emissions fleet vehicles and install charging infrastructure within depot sites in Bury St Edmunds, Haverhill and Mildenhall.</p>

More information on electric vehicles can be found on the West Suffolk Council and Suffolk County Council websites:

- [West Suffolk Council – Electric vehicles](#)
- [Suffolk County Council – Electric vehicle charging](#)