



Westmorland
& Furness
Council

Electric Vehicle Strategy

Part One





Introduction and context

Westmorland and Furness Council has a net zero target of 2037 and has set out a key priority to drive sustainable, inclusive and green growth in the region. Supporting a transition to sustainable and low carbon transport is a key component of achieving these targets and priorities. Electric Vehicles (EVs) are one of the several options Westmorland and Furness Council is considering for decarbonising the transport sector, as well as active travel and improvements to public transport.

Westmorland and Furness Council is committed to promoting the uptake of EVs and developing a robust charging infrastructure for residents, businesses and visitors. Encouraging the uptake of EVs is a priority to help to tackling climate change issues and by reducing traffic pollution, we will also improve the quality of life of people who live, work and visit Westmorland and Furness.

This Part One strategy aligns to our Climate Change Action Plan and the Cumbria Transport Infrastructure Plan, seeking to deliver sustainable and low carbon transport for our residents.



Our vision and objectives

EV Infrastructure, including the installation and maintenance of charge points, is a growing area for local government. Westmorland and Furness Council is committed to fulfilling this transformation. We as a council are guided by our values to be ecologically aware and ambitious, but also to be collaborative and inclusive. We will deliver EV charging for our residents, driven by the vision and priorities set out in the Council Plan, therefore our proposed long term vision for EV charging in Westmorland and Furness is:

For people	Our charge points will be accessible for all and residents will be confident they can recharge EVs conveniently
For the climate	We will explore opportunities to make use of renewable energy to power our chargers
For communities	We will work with parish and town councils to provide chargers at a local level
For the economy and culture	We will work to scale up EV charging to support businesses to more confidently adopting EVs
For our customers	We will ensure that ease of payment and customer service is at the heart of our procurement strategy
For our workforce	We will provide chargepoint accessibility to our employees

This early EV strategy is focused on setting out our vision and principles for EV charging infrastructure, however we recognise a wider role in encouraging the uptake of electric vehicles across our area.

Our objectives for electric vehicles in Westmorland and Furness are:

- To deliver on government funding for EV infrastructure, building a team of specialist resource, and accelerating EV charging installation on and off-street
- To develop a Westmorland and Furness standard of public charging which prioritises quality, ease of use, accessibility and affordability
- To take a proactive approach in creating a strong network of publicly accessible EV charge points which will meet the demand in the future
- To help address air quality issues that have, or will arise due to transport-related issues
- To inform and complement our wider policies on climate change and transport
- To raise awareness of the benefits of EVs and the charging infrastructure that is available
- To contribute to our commitment to become carbon net zero by 2037.

Electric vehicles and chargers in Westmorland and Furness

EV ownership is on the rise, in quarter one of 2023 there were 2067 plug-in vehicles registered. This, compared to quarter one of 2019 is a 492% increase. There needs to be increased charging provision to serve these vehicles, however in the same time period, there has only been a 100% increase in EV chargers, currently totalling at 292 public EV chargers in Westmorland and Furness. Therefore, to meet this growing demand, there is a need for increased EV charging provision. Westmorland and Furness council currently owns and operates 65 EV chargers across our car parks in South Lakeland and Barrow.

Delivering EV

Government Funding for EV infrastructure

To meet this growing demand the Government, in partnership with Energy Saving Trust (EST), launched a £450 million Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund. The Fund will see local authorities bid for funding to help accelerate the rollout of EV hubs and on-street charging.

Westmorland and Furness Council were successful in their application for £771,000 funding as part of the pilot Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) Fund and, through an allocation process we are set to receive an additional £3.5m capital funding.

We will deliver on this funding to install more off-street chargers in public car parks, but also deliver on-street EV chargers, for residents without off-street parking access.



Principles of approach

In developing our approach for LEVI and future EV charging projects, we will establish key principles which can inform our decision making throughout a project:

Accessible for all

There are 2.44 million blue badge holders in the UK. Accessibility concerns for EV chargepoints include physical access to chargepoint, ease of visual access and additional safety concerns due to lack of space. We will work to ensure accessibility for all.



Innovative and low-carbon:

To ensure we deliver a charging network to meet our net zero goals we must consider innovative solutions to powering and benefiting from the network.



Inclusive and affordable

To support inclusive growth an affordable charging offer is a must. This principle will be considered when we develop our procurement process and choose our partner. To meet this principle, we may wish to maintain influence over the prices of the charging.



Data orientated approach

It is important that as we develop our EV charging offer, we track and analyse the data available to make appropriate decisions on location and type of charger. We will ensure that in developing our charging network we have access to data on usage, peaks and trends.



Influencing EV

Leading by example

One way to influence others, is to lead by example and as an ambitious council, Westmorland and Furness will set a local example. We already operate over 17 electric or hybrid vehicles in our operational and pool car fleet, and we will look to develop a Transport Decarbonisation Strategy detailing how we will reduce emissions from our fleet.

Policy

As a new council, we are developing strategic interventions to deliver on our Council Plan priorities, many of which can be used as vehicles for driving our electric transition, including:

Policy	Strategic Outcome
Local Plan	Embedding EV charging into local housing development
Licensing strategy	Influencing and encouraging EV adoption
Public Health Strategy (Air quality)	Exploring the link between increased EV use and improved air quality locally
Local Transport Plan	Embedding EV infrastructure into local transport planning



Working with Partners

Our commitment in our Council Plan is to be collaborative, and in influencing EVs this is a crucial part of our approach. We will continue to work with partners including Cumberland Council, Cumbria Tourism, Electricity North West, Lake District National Park Authority, Yorkshire Dales National Park Authority and town and parish councils through the guise of the Cumbria EV Charging Group. We are keen to work with the private sector and with local operators such as Charge My Street.

Westmorland and Furness Council are committed to working with our communities and we recognise that for some residents in our small towns and villages there may be challenges in accessing chargepoints. This is why we are also committed to work with our parish and town councils to deliver chargepoints.

We will work with partners on the following:

- Providing electric vehicle charging to town and parish councils
- Developing a bespoke EV charging offer for visitors to Westmorland and Furness
- Supporting the expansion of rapid charging locally





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What next?

This is just a snapshot of the journey the council is on to work with partners to deliver sustainable and low carbon transport for our residents. We will follow this initial strategy with a Part Two which will outline in more detail how we will work collaboratively with all of you to facilitate the continued roll out of electric vehicle charging infrastructure across Westmorland and Furness in an efficient and cohesive manner.

Join us on this journey

At Westmorland and Furness Council, one of our core values is being collaborative, and engaging with our residents, businesses, community and partners is paramount to any potential success. The Electric Vehicle Strategy will contribute towards the Council's Climate Change Action Plan Part 2 and the Zero Carbon Cumbria Partnership goal of a zero carbon Cumbria by 2037. We will be reaching out to businesses, partners and community groups to support the development of the more detailed EV strategy and action plan, to continue to rollout of electric vehicle charging infrastructure in Westmorland and Furness, ahead of the UK phase out dates.

If you would like to get in touch with us, email:
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