

Update on Electric Vehicle Charging infrastructure in Tonbridge & Malling Borough Council

To: **Tonbridge & Malling Joint Transportation Board – March
2026**

Main Portfolio Area: **Growth, Environment & Transport**

By: **Tim Middleton, Networks Innovations Manager, KCC**

Classification: **For Information**

Summary: **This report provides an update on Electric Vehicle (EV) Charging Infrastructure in Tonbridge & Malling specifically outlining the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) project.**

1. Introduction

1.1. This report gives a broad overview of the Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure project (LEVI) announcement. It provides a look at Kent County Council's (KCC) role in ensuring residents and businesses are able to switch to electric vehicles (EVs) through providing public on-street electric vehicle charging infrastructure.

2. On-Street Electric Vehicles Charging Infrastructure

- 2.1. Electric Vehicle (EV) sales are growing in the UK and the demand for charging infrastructure is rising. Demand will be driven by the Zero Emission Vehicle mandate requiring 80% of cars sold in 2030 to be EV. This is not traditional refuelling as we know it. The speed, and therefore price, of charging varies from the slowest 3kwh up to a potential 350kwh. This could be the difference between charging in 10 hours or charging in 10 minutes.
- 2.2. Industry data suggests the vast numbers of EV owners choose to charge at home if they have access to a home charger. It is convenient and provides the lowest cost option. VAT on electricity is paid at 5% at home but 20% on the public network - arguably penalising those who do not have access to off-street parking.
- 2.3. In order to help the transition to electrification, with all the carbon and air quality benefits this would bring, KCC have developed an EV infrastructure programme to install EV charging points across the county.
- 2.4. In February 2023, the Office for Zero Emissions Vehicles (OZEV) published their regional allocation of Local Electric Vehicle Infrastructure (LEVI) funding, of which Kent County Council as a Tier 1 authority, was allocated £12,081,000 of ring fenced capital funds to influence the deployment of on-street residential electric vehicle charging.

- 2.5. The focus of the LEVI fund is to help deliver a step change in the deployment of local, primarily low power, on-street charging infrastructure to accelerate the commercialisation of, and investment in, the local charging infrastructure sector.
- 2.6. The Contract Notices for this opportunity were published on 25th November 2024. Over sixty expressions of interest were received in total and a thorough procurement process was undertaken with the deadline for Final Tenders of 8th September 2025.
- 2.7. In February 2026, contracts were signed with **Urban Fox**. Urban Fox are a joint venture between Balfour Beatty and Urban Electric Networks, combining Balfour Beatty's expertise in large-scale infrastructure delivery with Urban Electric's innovation in smart street-level charging technology. Urban Fox will install and operate the network of chargers.
- 2.8. A Press Notice was issued and it was picked up by many media channels and advertised on social media in early February.
- 2.9. Following award there is a 6 month mobilisation period followed by up to 10 years in which chargers will be installed across a phased delivery programme . The contract aims to deliver around 10,000 EV charger sockets across Kent, primarily on the highway, catering for those without easy access to off-street parking.
- 2.10. KCC have been engaging with District/Borough officers to ensure the proposed planning is suitable for each area and any initial challenges can be avoided. Additionally, the rollout has been indicatively designed using resident suggestions alongside multiple data sources considering propensity for off-street parking, future growth, the existing network, location details of existing EV's registered in Kent, to name a few. The network is designed to be equitable and cover all areas of Kent. Locations have been selected to avoid property frontages where possible to minimise disruption to residents.
- 2.11. The first year will see 150 locations installed county wide with 13 of those located within Tonbridge & Malling.
- 2.12. It is intended that each location will have an initial 2 sockets available (2 x bays) so as to minimise parking disruption in the early phases. Passive provision will be provided where appropriate enabling the majority of the civils works to take place at once. As utilisation and local demand increases, additional chargepoints can then be easily fitted, reducing the project cost and preventing additional disruption from further groundwork.
- 2.13. The vast majority of the chargers installed will be dual 7kw units with some 11kw and 22kw included where appropriate. Although the exact chargers selected will evolve with technological advances, a few images have been included in the Appendix.
- 2.14. The public and Councillors are invited to suggest suitable charger locations via an online portal <http://www.kent.gov.uk/onstreetev>. At the time of writing 60 locations have been suggested within Tonbridge & Malling by residents.
- 2.15. Charger locations will be accompanied by Traffic Regulation Orders and processed in the normal way, with the ability for residents to support or raise objections on traffic management grounds.

3. Cross pavement charging solutions

- 3.1. **Cable Gullies** - There has been some media attention on Cable Gullies or Cross Pavement Gullies over the last year. Officers have been looking at this situation closely and engaging with other Local Authorities and central Government on the matter.
- 3.2. Officers are currently awaiting an article update from the Institute of Engineering and Technology (IET) with regards to their IET 01 (2024) guidance note and how it should be interpreted with regards to simultaneous touch electrocution risk.
- 3.3. Furthermore the Government is expected to pass secondary legislation to remove the need for planning permission when installing a home charger that requires a cable gully. This is anticipated to come into effect later in 2026, removing some cost and time delays associated with any cable gully installation. It should be noted that the relevant highway permissions, purchase and installation costs and ongoing liability considerations for the charging cables would still apply.
- 3.4. It is expected that KCC will be able to take a decision as to whether to proceed with a limited scale gully trial later in 2026.
- 3.5. **Trojan Home** – KCC are working with Trojan Energy on a small scale trial to test their Trojan Home product, allowing homeowners to utilise their home electricity tariffs. The Trojan Home product is regulated like any other on street installation and at the time of writing, 10 installations have taken place with a small expansion to that trial anticipated. Residents can visit KCC's website to [find out more](#).

Appendix A



Figure 1 - Examples of on street chargers anticipated to be used in the LEVI project.