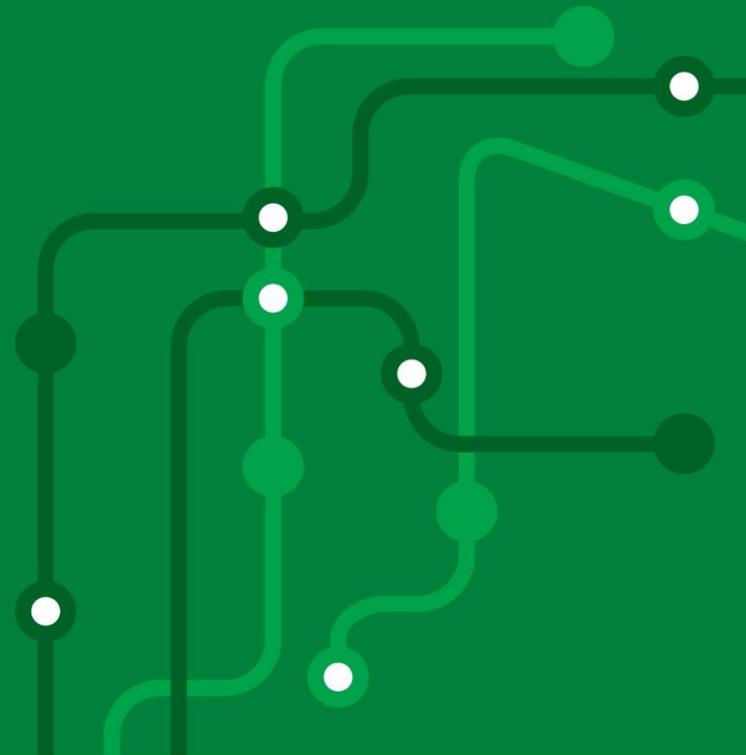


Transport **North East**

North East Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) Strategy – Consultation Summary Report December 2023



Moving to a green, healthy, dynamic
and thriving North East.

Background

The North East Zero Emission Vehicle (ZEV) strategy sets out our aim to deliver reliable public zero emission vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East, wherever people need it. The consultation draft strategy focused on the approach that: Excellent Infrastructure + Well Informed People = Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles. This approach was based on the belief that by delivering a comprehensive and inclusive public infrastructure network offer, together with clear positive messaging, we can support people and businesses to switch from petrol and diesel cars or vans to ZEVs.

Developed on behalf of the North East Joint Transport Committee, the strategy builds on the 2022 North East ZEV policy, which outlined initial proposals for how the region will complement private sector charging facilities, co-ordinate action with local authority charging initiatives and build a partnership with Northern Powergrid and Scottish Power.

The strategy is intended to help reduce the environmental impact of car/van travel by encouraging the switch to ZEVs. It is not the aim of the strategy to encourage people who are already walking, wheeling, cycling or using public transport to switch to a zero emission vehicle. Instead, we want to promote the use of ZEVs for journeys which must be made by cars and vans.

Consultation with the public and stakeholder groups was an important and valued step in developing the strategy. The consultation helped us to shape the final document, ensuring it addressed the needs of our communities, and provided a transparent and open process.

How we told you about the consultation

The ZEV Draft Strategy consultation ran for five weeks from 3rd October to 7th November. To reach as many people and stakeholder groups as possible, a multi-channel approach was used, including:

- Frequent organic social media posts on the Transport North East media channels, including Facebook, Twitter and LinkedIn;
- Partner communications – working with local authorities to encourage residents and organisations to have their say on the proposals. Local authorities shared messaging on social media platforms, staff intranets, across public spaces, libraries where possible and consultation platforms;
- Digital Posters and flyers distributed to local authorities for display in public spaces including libraries;
- Print advertising in regional newspapers;
- Digital paid advertising through Meta (Facebook and Instagram);
- Media activity, including BBC regional television and radio pieces;
- Information and an online survey available via www.transportnortheast.gov.uk;
- A dedicated consultation telephone hotline, option to post responses and a dedicated email address in operation throughout the consultation;
- Three online stakeholder consultation events which included a Q&A session – held on a variety of different days/times.
- A total of seven drop-in public engagement events across all North East local authorities, with some held during school holiday periods;

- E-mail communication with interested groups.

The strategy was also available in alternative formats upon request. The TNE consultation guidelines were followed throughout the consultation process.

Your response

As part of the consultation, we asked the public and stakeholder groups their views on the strategy's:

- Key aim and approach
- Barriers to ZEV uptake

A total of 838 pieces of engagement were received as part of the consultation. The majority responded by completing the online surveys, but feedback was also received via email, on social media and by comment card submissions at our in-person engagement events.

To summarise, we received:

Public engagement response:

- 482 responses to the online survey
- 323 comment cards
- 20 social media comments
- 2 emails

Stakeholder engagement response:

- 7 responses to the survey from organisations
- 4 stakeholder responses received via email

We also received 18 registrations for engagement events which were open to both members of the public and other stakeholders.

Response Themes

Every piece of feedback was read and reviewed by the team, and the below table summarises the five main themes from the feedback, along with our response.

Table 1 – consultation insights from both members of the public and other stakeholders

Response theme	Insights	Response
Cost	The theme of cost came through strongly throughout responses. The initial purchasing cost of ZEVs was seen by many as prohibitive. This includes the cost of charging, which is often cited as a barrier as well as	We understand that for many, cost is a major barrier to purchasing a ZEV. We have improved clarity of wording highlighting that issues of cost are outside of the scope of the strategy. We have retained the emphasis in discussion on barriers of cost. We have no levers in which to influence the cost

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	<p>insurance and maintenance costs. We heard that the second-hand market is not broad or deep enough yet for a wide scale regional change in ZEV uptake. There are also concerns around the costs to replace ZEVs and their components, which are not always seen as having a suitably long life cycle. Concerns around cost were also framed against the ongoing cost of living crisis, with some feeling that public funds spent on charging infrastructure could be used elsewhere.</p>	<p>of ZEVs. We will however aim to raise awareness of this issue and highlight cost impacts on ZEV take up in the region.</p> <p>We acknowledge that the cost of living crisis is having a significant impact for people in our region.</p> <p>We have updated wording around the national policy context in line with recent developments.</p> <p>The strategy includes a list of proposed schemes that are not currently funded. All proposals would need to meet bid criteria before being assessed for value for money and benefit to the public when funding allocation decisions are made.</p>
Support for the strategy	<p>Respondents were supportive of the strategy and its approach, often on the grounds of air quality and environmental benefits that may be gained by an increase in ZEV uptake. Some respondents have highlighted that this will be important to the future of our region, making sure that the North East is not left behind after a transition to ZEVs.</p>	<p>We have emphasised that the aim of the strategy is to deliver reliable public Zero Emission Vehicle charging infrastructure across the North East, wherever people need it throughout the strategy.</p> <p>The consultation draft strategy focused on the approach that: Excellent Infrastructure + Well Informed People = Increase in Zero Emission Vehicles, this approach has been retained.</p>
Reliability	<p>Respondents highlighted concerns around the reliability of both ZEVs and ZEV infrastructure. A perceived lack of reliability of chargepoints, as well as the lack of reliable information on current infrastructure, was highlighted, as well as concerns about the reliability of ZEVs for people's everyday needs. This includes range anxiety, which combines with a perception that there are not enough chargepoints in enough locations to support longer distance travel. Beyond this, there are concerns about</p>	<p>We have reviewed our wording to ensure we are reflecting the perception of ZEV and electric vehicle charging infrastructure reliability as a barrier in the 'What are the challenges?' chapter.</p> <p>Within the delivery plan, Scheme TNE18a focusses on funding replacement or upgrading existing EV infrastructure. We seek funding for the schemes in the delivery plan.</p>

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	the lifespan of the vehicles and their components.	
Access and Accessibility	<p>Respondents raised concerns about their ability to access and easily use electric vehicle charging infrastructure, especially for those without the option for at home charging. This is not limited to the cost and location of chargepoints, but also includes concerns about the speeds available and the connectors available at provision, as well as the need for smartphones and different apps to use chargepoints operated by different operators. Issues were raised about the accessibility of provision and vehicles for those with mobility aids. Infrastructure taking up pavement space was seen as unacceptable for many.</p>	<p>Central government have approved new regulations around Electric Vehicle Chargepoints which will allow for more information to be accessible. We have added a section outlining the regulations and what they mean for the region.</p> <p>The strategy already highlights the critical importance of accessibility throughout. We have maintained this emphasis after the consultation and added a new section on Publicly Available Specification (PAS) 1889 design standards, which aim to ensure that chargepoint infrastructure is designed and built accessibly.</p> <p>Inclusivity was built into the strategy from the planning phase, and the consultation helped to reinforce messaging in the strategy around accessibility, ensuring this remained at the forefront. Scheme (TNE49) in the delivery plan proposes the creation of a stakeholder forum specifically for disabled stakeholders to advise on accessibility needs for public chargepoint infrastructure.</p>
General Comments	<p>Some other general issues were highlighted during the consultation process.</p> <p>For example, some respondents disagreed with the language of the 'well informed people' component of the aims and approach.</p> <p>The potential for hydrogen and other alternatives to refuelling was seen as a better option by some respondents.</p>	<p>We have clarified that 'informed people' does not relate to people's knowledge of ZEVs, instead we want people to be well informed about regional infrastructure they could use.</p> <p>We have revisited and updated all figures and facts where possible post consultation.</p> <p>The strategy focusses on public electric vehicle infrastructure; however it also makes reference to the potential role for other zero emission vehicle fuel types in the future. Future refreshes may strengthen the reference to other zero emission vehicle vehicles and infrastructure as the zero emission vehicle fuelling field develops.</p>

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Following endorsement from the North East Joint Transport Committee, the strategy will be published on the Transport North East website www.transportnortheast.gov.uk. The strategy will be used to help shape the future of travel in the region, allowing us to make a strategic case for investment in our travel network.