



Vicky Edmonds
Chief Executive Officer
EVA England
37-39 Southgate Street
Winchester
SO23 9EH

The Rt Hon Heidi Alexander MP
Department for Transport
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London
SW1P 4DR

18 June 2026

Dear Secretary of State,

I am writing an open letter as the Chief Executive of EVA England, the country's only independent consumer body representing electric vehicle drivers, to request an urgent meeting with you following the recent debate being carried out in the media about weakening the ZEV Mandate.

I also wanted to share our new report, *Putting the Driver First*, which highlights how vital it is to make sure that the driver's experience of going electric is taken into account when looking at the Mandate and the underlying policies that support it.

As a drivers' body, we are seriously concerned that this voice is getting lost at a critical point in the EV transition. Consumers are the people most directly affected by the shift to electric vehicles. They are not being mandated to buy electric, they must choose to do so. Their confidence, affordability concerns and day-to-day experiences should not be peripheral to decision-making, they should be central to it.

Reports that the Government may again weaken the Mandate risk sending precisely the wrong signal to drivers, as well as industry and investors. Drivers need certainty. They need confidence that the cars they are being asked to buy are the right choice, and that means stopping the very public back and forth arguments over the ZEV mandate and maintaining it as it is: as a strong and stable policy backbone for the transition.

UK drivers are not anti-EV: many are already considering electric cars as they would any major household purchase, and are ready to switch where the price, charging and practical fundamentals are right. Those who have switched overwhelmingly support the move, with EVA England research showing that 95% of EV drivers would not go back to petrol or diesel.

But our new report also shows that we are about to hit the hardest part of the transition – where we are asking those on lower- and middle-incomes and those without driveways to buy into a technology that is still too expensive, and does not yet work for them. The Mandate, in and of itself, plays a vital role in helping address those barriers by driving the investment we will need to see to create an industry that works for the driver. And we need Government attention to be

focussed on the critical role it must play in addressing those barriers, not on re-opening the Mandate, or the transition will fail. Upfront cost remains the leading barrier for many lower and middle-income households, even where drivers are open to going electric. Charging access and charging costs are creating a two-tier transition and a major structural divide, particularly for the estimated 40% of households without access to a driveway, who are reliant on expensive public charging at chargepoints that often do not work or are inaccessible.

Our report also raises our continued serious concerns about the proposed introduction of electric Vehicle Excise Duty and any future pay-per-mile model at such a sensitive moment in the transition. With only 5.5% of the total car parc electric, British consumers currently being extremely price-sensitive, and 40% still EV sceptical, now is not the right time to introduce an additional tax that many drivers see as an EV-only tax. It risks undermining confidence just when we need to focus on making sure more drivers are beginning to see EVs as a viable, practical option.

I would therefore welcome the opportunity to discuss these concerns with you, or the most relevant Minister, as a matter of urgency. In the meantime, a short summary of our report's three key pillars is included in this letter, which I hope will give insight into the practical measures we believe would get drivers into electric cars at this critical stage of the transition.

Thank you for your consideration. I look forward to hearing from you.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'V Edmonds'.

Vicky Edmonds
Chief Executive Officer
EVA England

Summary of key recommendations from *Putting the Driver First*

1. Generating widespread access to, and trust in, electric vehicles

The transition will only succeed if drivers can access vehicles that meet their needs and budgets. Government should target incentives to those who most need them, and support greater access to the second-hand EV market. This includes recognising the role that leasing is playing in getting more and more households into electric by both extending benefit-in-kind rates beyond 2030 and looking at the role of social leasing as a way to bring the costs of driving electric closer to the monthly transport budget of middle-income households. It also includes accelerated action to introduce a battery health standard that provides much-needed protection and reassurance to drivers looking at used EVs.

2. Delivering a clear plan for households without access to private charging

It is not true that most charging will take place at home. We estimate that at least 40% of households will need to rely solely on the public network for their charging, and all households will use it to differing extents for work or travel. For drivers without off-street parking, charging cost and accessibility remain major barriers, and it isn't fair to ask them to buy electric when 50% of EV drivers without driveways are paying more to run their EV than their previous petrol or diesel car. The Government should take the opportunity that the Cost of Charging Review presents to deliver a clear plan for how to get households without access to a driveway into EVs. This isn't just about faster local charging deployment, it is about strong and bold action to bring down the cost of public charging, it is about accelerating the rollout of affordable alternatives such as cross-pavement, workplace charging and charger sharing, and it is about taking real steps to strengthen and enforce regulations on the reliability, usability and accessibility of public chargepoints.

3. Delaying and redesigning the proposed EVED and pay-per-mile approach

Drivers need certainty and confidence during the transition period. Introducing new EV costs at a crucial point in the market risks creating a further barrier to uptake, particularly for price-sensitive households. Government should delay implementation until at least 2030, when action has been taken to address the structural barriers highlighted above, and make sure that the design of the scheme is fair, proportionate and works for drivers from day one. This includes having a rapid refund regime in place, protections for drivers from additional third-party and surcharges, and exempting international miles.