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Rt Hon Louise Haigh MP
Cabinet Office
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Dear First Secretary of State,

I am writing on behalf of EVA England, the country's only independent consumer body representing electric vehicle drivers, to ask that decisions being taken in the coming weeks on the outcome of the Government's ZEV Mandate review, take into account the impact on the full breadth of the EV sector, including drivers themselves.

The ZEV mandate has been critical in creating and maintaining an electric vehicle (EV) market that is starting to work for the consumer and its current trajectory must be maintained. It has driven a supply of cars that people want to drive, underpinned investment in a charging infrastructure that is badly needed, allowed people to save thousands of pounds a year in their household running costs, and sent a clear message to all drivers that electric cars are the cars of the future.

That is borne out in the numbers: at 26.6% of sales across 2026 so far, we are ahead of the UK's effective EV sales targets. We are seeing increasing numbers of chargepoints, with over 126,000 connections across 48,000 locations; and the chargepoint sector's economic contribution under the current ZEV mandate trajectory is expected to increase to £15.5 billion by 2035. **The ZEV mandate is doing its job, driving demand and growth in a new, emerging market that will improve the affordability and resilience of people's everyday lives.**

But that stable policy environment and that economic progress are now under threat. Our latest EVA England survey of 2,635 drivers shows that repeated reviews and shifting targets have fuelled ongoing misinformation and led to public, divisive debates around electric cars. This is affecting people's confidence in EVs and their willingness to recommend them to family and friends. Whilst 93% of EV drivers love their car, 38% say that recent Government announcements and industry messaging have affected confidence in the cars.

Drivers are a critical voice often missing in discussions over major Government policies, but they are impacted by and central to their success. People are not being mandated to buy electric - they must choose to do so - and their confidence, affordability concerns and day-to-day experiences can determine whether a major Government policy such as the EV transition is successful or not.

Drivers need confidence that the cars they are being asked to buy are the right choice, and they need attention to be given to the major structural barriers that are holding them back from switching: half of EV drivers and 41% of petrol and diesel still say upfront cost is a major purchase hurdle to overcome. 9 in 10 EV drivers have access to private charging, and for those that don't, only 32% are finding their EV

cheaper to run than their previous petrol or diesel car. And all drivers we survey have continued serious concerns about the proposed introduction of eVED at such a volatile moment in the transition.

The potential that Government may once again weaken the ZEV mandate is sending the wrong signal to those that we need to buy electric in order to drive up the demand that industry wants to see. **We ask that the Government puts a stop to the public back and forth over the ZEV mandate, maintaining it as it is, and instead focusses attention on tackling the barriers holding people back from switching to an EV: upfront cost, affordable charging and a charging network that is fit for purpose.**

Government incentives like the Electric Car Grant must be re-targeted at those who need them most – middle and lower income households who wish to purchase an EV but cannot afford to do so. Targeted social leasing schemes have been proven to break this barrier in countries such as France, and must be looked at as a serious proposition for the UK.

We welcome the recommendations put forward by Philip New in the Cost of Public Charging Review, and the Government's commitment to take forward 'tariff porting' – a commitment that puts the driver first and has real potential to make sure we pay a fair price at the chargepoint. But it must be coupled with parallel commitments to take forward the other recommendations in the Review aimed at reducing energy costs to Chargepoint Operators, so improving prices across the full public charging network, including rapid chargers.

And we must also see action to improve the experience that we, as drivers, have at the chargepoint. Ongoing frustrations with broken chargers and increasing issues with payment and connection processes mean only 48% of EV drivers now believe the public charging network is improving, compared to 69% in previous years. We urgently need an independent, statutory body to monitor compliance with the public chargepoint regulations on behalf of consumers, and provide them with a recourse for complaints and resolution when they encounter problems.

And finally, eVED must be delayed until at least 2030, ensuring that it can work for drivers from day one.

UK drivers are not anti-EV: many are already considering electric cars and are ready to switch where the price, charging and practical fundamentals are right. Those who have switched overwhelmingly support the move. But the answer to increasing the demand we need to see is not to lower ambition and investment in a growing sector. It is to remove the barriers preventing drivers from choosing electric in the first place.

Yours sincerely,

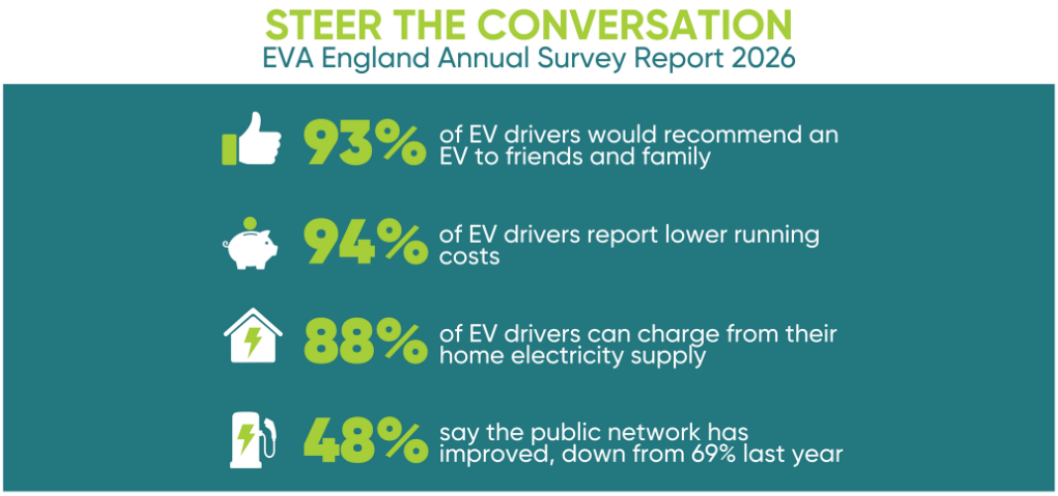
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EVA England Steer the Conversation survey 2026: summary of findings

National survey of 2,635 UK petrol, diesel, hybrid and all-electric drivers conducted in August and September 2026

Key findings



1. **EV drivers remain strongly content with their cars, but confidence in the wider transition is under pressure.**

   93% would recommend an EV to friends and family, and 93% plan to stay electric; but 71% feel the very public and divisive debate around electric cars fails to reflect their experience, and 38% believe recent Government announcements and policy changes – notably around the proposed new pay per mile scheme (eVED) and the public debate on the ZEV mandate - have affected confidence in driving electric.

2. **The financial case for driving electric is strong, but the price of getting an EV still holds too many back.**

   94% of EV drivers report lower running costs, yet 52% still say upfront cost was a major purchase hurdle to overcome, and 41% of non-electric drivers say they would go electric if these cars were cheaper. EVs are still largely the preserve of the wealthy, with less than 30% being driven within households on lower and middle incomes of less than £49,999 a year.

3. **Home charging remains fundamental, and the two-tier transition is becoming more and more of a problem.**

   88% of EV drivers can charge from their home electricity supply. For those unable to do so, and reliant on the public network, only 32% now say their electric car is cheaper to run than their previous petrol or diesel car, compared to 50% last year – marking a clear and increasing charging divide. The cost benefits of going electric are being realised by households able to access private charging but not by those who cannot. This charging divide continues to be the biggest structural barrier to the success of the ZEV mandate and wider EV transition and needs urgent attention.

4. **Public charging is growing, but drivers' experiences on the network are worsening, and this area needs far more focus from Government, Parliamentarians and industry, with more consistent standards and accountability.**

   The number of EV drivers who believe the public charging network is improving has dropped from 69% last year to 48% this year. Drivers continue to be frustrated by chargepoints that don't work, difficulties reporting and resolving problems, unclear prices, and complex payment and connection processes. EV drivers deserve an experience at the chargepoint that is as seamless as filling up at a petrol pump – and an industry that is driving towards that and taking their frustrations seriously.