

1. What are your views on the Action Plan?

The very existence of this strategy is a vital step in future-proofing our infrastructure. We must enable people in Wales to take advantage of the advancements of green technology in the way we travel, and that includes building the right infrastructure and making it widely available.

The plan is right in recognising that we do have a lower level of provision for EV charging in Wales compared to other parts of the UK. However, where we put that infrastructure, and how it fits with our goals for modal shift and behaviour change are equally important.

If active travel, and specifically pedestrians, are to remain at the top of the sustainable transport hierarchy; then the development of electric vehicle (EV) charging infrastructure cannot be to the detriment of those who active travel, and our efforts to encourage more people to do so. The two (infrastructure development and behaviour change) must work together; and rather than simply encourage people to use EVs instead of traditional motor cars, we should be encouraging people to make local, everyday journeys, via modes of active travel.

Currently, private vehicles are everywhere and often dominate both public and private spaces. Parking for private vehicles often takes up large amounts of our public realm. As a result, development in these areas have often struggled to revert back to putting people, rather than vehicles, first.

If we are to see EV charging points accompany many of the spaces we currently allocate to private vehicles (whether that is; outside the home, the office or in community spaces such as retail areas, healthcare settings and education centres), then we must be steadfast in our determination that infrastructure to accommodate EVs will not further encroach upon spaces that are supposed to be for people (such as pavements). Instead, the space to accommodate this new EV charging infrastructure must come from spaces already allocated for private vehicles. In this case, that will mean space that is already allocated as parking spaces.

Currently the Quality Standards are not detailed enough, and we need more integration in the action plan between new infrastructure and behaviour change projects. Without this we will not achieve our sustainable transport our goals in Wales.

2. What are your views on progress made against Action 1: Charging infrastructure?

We welcome the integration of infrastructure (including EV infrastructure) to support public transport, active travel, and other policy initiatives that will help deliver benefits to communities.

However, that isn't currently what we are seeing. There seems to be very little leadership in this area, and whilst the delivery of significant infrastructure remains slow, the pressure to rush ahead grows. What we don't want to see are hastily developed solutions that is to the detriment to future generations who should be encouraged to active travel rather than use private vehicles for local, everyday journeys.

3. What are your views on progress made against Action 2: Optimisation of energy provision?

The delivery of energy infrastructure must be delivered in a way that meets accessibility needs. At the moment those with accessibility needs, and those who understand the importance of the sustainable transport hierarchy do not have the ear of distribution network operators, and this could lead to issues further down the line.

4. What are your views on progress made against Action 3: Enhanced rapid charging provision?

N/A

What are your views on progress made against Action 4: Welsh quality standards?

The Welsh Quality Standards will be really important in ensuring that infrastructure promotes active travel, however, there is currently a severe lack of industry standards that promote this. Relying in any way on industry standards alone is a missed opportunity to ensure that new infrastructure is accessible and promotes modal shift. Spatial planning needs to involve wider groups of stakeholders and the active travel community.

What are your views on progress made against Action 5: Regulatory facilitation?

Any review of building regulations, including both existing builds adapting to accommodate EV charging and new builds, must not permit EV charging points to be placed on or across, or interrupt in any way pavements and routes where people are encouraged to active travel.

What are your views on progress made against Action 6: Partnership and collaboration?

NA

What are your views on progress made against Action 7: Increase public awareness?

What are your views on progress made against Action 8: Encourage investment opportunity and innovation?

There is great value in active travel. The economic benefits are vast in both health prevention and the promotion of local economies through pedestrianisation. More action on this would improve outcomes.

What are your views on progress made against Action 9: Create synergies?

What are your views on the strategy ?

Sadly, the strategy fails to incorporate prevention across the document to future-proof infrastructure and is a late addition at the end. This means it is unlikely to be successful, nor is it likely to impact on the decisions that will be influenced by the guidance in the action plan. For example, by encouraging the use of EIAs in ensuring that EV charging infrastructure is built in an accessible way, and which does not impact on those seeking to use modes of transport higher on the sustainable transport hierarchy.

Do you have any other points you wish to raise within the scope of this inquiry?