

On Street Electric Vehicle Charging Guidance for Northumberland residents

Northumberland County Council recognises the benefits of Electric Vehicles (EV), particularly in relation to air quality, reducing carbon and public health. We are seeing an increase in the number of requests from residents seeking permission to charge their EV when they don't have a driveway to allow for the safe charging of the vehicle.

This guidance has been produced to aid residents for whom off street parking is not available but wish to charge their vehicle.

In many cases EV come with a charging cable that can safely allow the vehicle to be charged at home using a normal 3-pin 13amp socket. In those cases where a vehicle is not able to be charged on a driveway off-street, it may be possible for the council to licence the placing of a cable over the footpath provided certain conditions are met.

In all cases it is incumbent on the vehicle owner to refer to the vehicle's handbook and understand any instructions for the use of cables, including extension cables (if permitted), and seek advice from a qualified electrician before charging an electric vehicle.

As a council we have to consider the safety of members of the public in the first instance and to examine existing legislation when we receive a proposal to place a cable from the power source in your home to your vehicle. Any legal liability arising from the council giving you permission to place a cable or protector over the footpath is your responsibility. Therefore, you may wish to speak to your home insurer to confirm that your existing home insurance policy covers this situation, or you would like to make an amendment.

In granting any permission to place a cable over the footpath for the charging of an EV it is the responsibility of the person charging the vehicle to comply with any local parking restrictions and to not obstruct the footpath when charging.

It is the responsibility of the person charging the vehicle to adhere to any parking restrictions that may be in place and to not obstruct the footway or any accesses. The guidance is intended to help residents make informed decisions about how they can charge a vehicle in these locations. It is the responsibility of the person charging the vehicle to avoid putting themselves and others at risk when trailing a cable across a footway or an area people may cross.

Parking your electric vehicle for charging

At all times cars must be parked to comply with any existing on-street parking restrictions and the Highway Code. Vehicles must be parked as close to the property as possible to reduce unnecessary lengths of cable being placed on the footpath. Cars must not be parked on the footpath.

If you are unable to park your vehicle directly outside your property, and an additional length of cable is required, you should run the cable from your property into the carriageway channel and safely run it alongside the kerb. Care must be taken to prevent the cable from being tangled with other vehicles, bicycles and street furniture.

The maximum recommended distance from the point where the charging cable leaves your property is 10 metres or approximately 2 car lengths.

Under no circumstances will the charging cable be permitted to cross the carriageway. Therefore, your car must be parked on the same side of the road as your property.

Charging your electric vehicle

At all times refer to your manufacturers handbook for charging your vehicle and follow their guidance.

If you have to use an extension lead to charge your vehicle it must be suitable for external use and all instructions must be followed. If in doubt, please consult with a qualified electrician.

When placing cables on the footpath they should be laid flat and must never be extended from an upper storey to a vehicle, nor should they be hung from or attached to any street furniture including lamp columns, bollards, benches and trees.

Cable should be removed immediately from the footway once a vehicle is charged.

It is the resident's responsibility to ensure that the cable and its protector does not cause a danger or a nuisance to the public, or limit access for pedestrians with disabilities.

Licensing

EV charging cables do not currently require a licence. However, The Highways Act 1980 gives Highway Authorities the power to remove cables that are across a highway in such a manner as to be likely to cause danger to persons using the highway, unless it can be proven that all necessary means have been taken to give adequate warning of the danger.

It is therefore the Council's decision to licence the temporary placement of a cable over a highway, subject to terms and conditions. This licence will be issued under section 178 of the Highways Act 1980, with a key condition being the use of a cable protector.

Thank You

Northumberland County Council Highways and Transport