

## Written evidence submitted by The British Rental and Leasing Association (EVS0001)

1. On behalf of the British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association (BVRLA), I am pleased to provide this response regarding progress with the Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy.
2. BVRLA members are at the forefront of the transition to electric vehicles. Charging infrastructure is a critical enabler of the transition. We therefore welcome this inquiry and are pleased to share our thoughts on progress to date and what more could be done.

### Progress Against Chargepoint Targets

3. The BVRLA's latest **Road to Zero Report Card** outlines the progress made towards the target of 300,000 chargepoints, as set out in the EV Infrastructure Strategy. Aligned with the National Audit Office's findings, our data showed that we are currently tracking against an exponential curve and are on target to meet the 300,000 minimum chargepoints as set out in the EV Infrastructure Strategy. Whether this progress will continue as the curve steepens further as we approach 2030 is questionable.

### Public Chargepoint Reliability

4. We welcomed the introduction of the 99% reliability standard for public chargepoints in November as a key measure to improve customer confidence. Our **Road to Zero Report Card**, published in July 2024, showed that we were just below this standard, with a reliability rate of 98.1%. Achieving this standard will require ongoing efforts from chargepoint operators and continued oversight to ensure that infrastructure is both available and functional for users.

### Fleet Friendly Charging Infrastructure

5. Recognising the unique needs of fleet operators and the increasing role of local authorities in planning and providing chargepoint infrastructure, the BVRLA produced a **Fleet Charging Guide**. This guide highlights the diverse charging needs of fleet users, including issues around access to suitable charging locations and infrastructure.
6. To complement the Guide, we conducted a Freedom of Information (FOI) request to upper-tier local authorities, seeking information on how they engage with the fleet sector regarding EV infrastructure. The findings showed that, while there have been improvements, with most councils now having dedicated points of contact and strategies for EV infrastructure, engagement with the fleet sector remains insufficient, with only 39% of councils actively engaging with fleet operators. This gap in engagement remains a key concern, as fleets often have distinct charging needs that are not always considered in local authority plans.

### Fleet-Specific Charging Challenges

7. Fleets face significant challenges in accessing suitable public charging infrastructure. Below are some examples:
  - i. **Motability Operations:** The largest leasing fleet in the UK, Motability's customers lack the ability to charge at home, meaning they are highly reliant on public charging infrastructure. In a report published by the Motability Foundation and Ricardo it claimed that up to 50% (1.35 million) of all drivers or passengers with a disability (estimated at 2.7 million) are expected to be partially or wholly reliant on public charging infrastructure. Of that 1.35 million, 0.93 million of the total number of disabled drivers are unlikely to be able to charge their vehicle at home, with 0.54 million within that being dependent on on-street parking to park and charge, and the remaining 0.39 million unlikely to have adequate on-street charging either.

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- ii. **Rental Fleets:** Rental customers often lack confidence in the availability of chargepoints, especially around airports and popular tourist destinations. The utilisation of electric rental vehicles is much lower than petrol and diesel vehicles with renters often showing a reluctance to take an electric vehicle due to fears over where and how to charge.
  - iii. **Vans:** Van drivers face ongoing issues with accessibility, as many vans are unable to access chargepoints due to bay sizes, height restrictions, and other logistical challenges. There is no universal coverage for EV Fuelcards, with a top provider claiming 85% coverage. Being able to reserve a charging bay is vital for fleet logistics yet almost all charging in the UK lacks the ability to advance book.
8. These challenges are outlined in more detail in the [Road to Zero Report Card](#), the [Fleet Charging Guide](#), and the [Zero Emission Van Plan](#).

### Recommendations

9. To address these challenges, we make the following recommendations:
- i. **Van Accessible Charging:** It is critical that chargepoint operators (CPOs) and local authorities consider van-specific needs when planning infrastructure. This includes addressing size and height requirements for chargepoints, the ability to book charging slots in advance, and ensuring a nationwide “roaming” solution for fleets using different charge networks. The Public Charge Point Regulations 2023 should be expanded to ensure public charging works for e – vans.
  - ii. **Greater Transparency of Reliability Compliance:** There needs to be greater transparency from chargepoint operators regarding how they are meeting the requirements of the consumer regulations, especially concerning reliability. This should include clear reporting and monitoring of reliability metrics.
  - iii. **Cost Discrepancies:** The cost discrepancy between home and public charging remains a significant barrier for many users. We recommend including electricity within the Renewable Transport Fuel Obligation (RTFO) to help reduce the cost burden for users reliant on public charging and equalising VAT rates from 20% to 5% on public charging.
  - iv. **Local Authority Support for Fleet Engagement:** We urge local authorities to enhance their engagement with fleets to ensure that charging infrastructure is rolled out in the right locations, tailored to the needs of diverse vehicle types. This includes understanding the unique needs of fleets that may not be fully addressed through public charging alone.
  - v. **Workplace Charging Support:** We recommend the continuation of the workplace charging grant alongside the creation of a Grid Connections Fund to assist fleets in installing charging infrastructure at worksites and depots, addressing the practical challenges of establishing on-site charging.
  - vi. **Destination Charging Provision:** There is a need to ensure adequate provision of destination charging that meets users’ needs, particularly for those who rely on EVs for long-distance travel or are unable to charge at home. A clear and coordinated approach to destination charging will support widespread adoption of EVs.

### Conclusion

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10. The progress towards the EV Infrastructure Strategy target is encouraging, but substantial challenges remain—particularly for fleet operators and those reliant on public charging. To achieve the targets set out for 2030, we must ensure that charging infrastructure is not only expanded but is also accessible, reliable, and suited to the needs of all vehicle types.
11. The BVRLA remains committed to working with the government, local authorities, chargepoint operators, and other stakeholders to address these challenges and help facilitate the transition to a cleaner, greener transport system.
12. We look forward to continuing to collaborate with the committee and other stakeholders to drive progress against the EV infrastructure strategy and rollout of charging infrastructure across the UK.

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