

moto



A 'Motofesto' for UK Drivers

Creating a Fair Electric Future
that works for everyone



Foreword from Ken McMeikan, CEO at Moto Hospitality

For the best part of a century, the internal combustion engine has been dominant. But change is upon us, and the move to electric vehicles (EV) will be nothing less than a major revolution.

The ban on the sale of all traditional cars is now just seven years away, by which time we expect there to be 14 million EVs on UK roads.

But is the charging infrastructure ready? We say it's getting there, but we mustn't rest on our laurels – the UK must continue to invest the time, effort and money now to ensure that EV charging keeps pace with increasing demand, and thereby support the ban becoming a full throttled accelerator for the mass adoption of electric vehicles.

Moto is committed to making the switch to EVs easier by rolling out major EV charging superhubs to provide reliability, simplicity and speed of charging. Along with our partners, GRIDSERVE and Tesla, we are already leading the ambitious rollout of superfast chargers across the motorway network.

But there are still major structural, social and political barriers to EV ownership. It's no surprise that motorists are deterred by both the complexity and cost of the switch, as well as the potential for continued range anxiety.

It's time to break down those barriers.

This 'Motofesto' sets out what Moto believe the Government must do to empower industry to accelerate the increase in charging provision for consumers, and to speed up EV adoption in a way that leaves no driver behind.

Kennedy McMeikan

Ken McMeikan
CEO, Moto Hospitality



Motofesto

Our campaign for a fair electric vehicle future calls on ministers to:



1. Identify EV infrastructure development as 'nationally significant', and speed up planning consents for network connections



2. Create further EV installation targets for motorways and A roads that oblige DNOs, landlords, motorway service operators and local authorities involved to deliver and meet 2030 charging demands together



3. To tackle prohibitively expensive grid connections, accelerate access to the £950m rapid charging fund which was originally announced in 2020



4. Dramatically increase the UK's sustainable power supply to keep EV drivers moving on net zero carbon energy



5. Introduce laws to help companies who install critical EV infrastructure in negotiations with their landlords



6. Reinstate the Plug-in Car Grant for more affordable new models and extend it to used EV cars



7. Scrap the 20% rate of VAT on public chargers, or bring it into line with the home charging rate at 5%



8. Put the brakes on the planned introduction of Vehicle Duty for electric cars



9. Launch a sustained publicity campaign on the benefits and practicalities of EV ownership



Removing the barriers to industry

Fast, simple and reliable charging infrastructure is crucial to the success of the UK's move to electric vehicles, and to cutting the anxiety motorists hold about them. From speaking to our own customers and the wider industry, we know that the two greatest hurdles are charging anxiety* – which has replaced range anxiety** – and cost. Here are the main ways Government must help industry:

Make EV infrastructure 'nationally significant' and give special guidance to local authorities to speed up planning consents

According to the UK Government, 264,000 public chargers will be needed across the UK by 2030 to achieve a smooth transition to EVsⁱ.

As of May 2023, there are only 42,566ⁱⁱ.

One of the biggest challenges to delivering EV chargers at scale is that planning advice to local authorities hasn't kept pace with the complex needs of EV charging hubs. Decisions are almost solely viewed through a local lens rather than a national picture. Critical EV Infrastructure development should be designated as being of national significance and those projects must be given special dispensations. Giving extra guidance to councils on the requirements for public EV charging provision would streamline the decision-making process, both in terms of planning consent for site developments and connections to the power network.

Revise EV charger installation targets for motorways and A roads so that the burden of delivery extends beyond charging network operators and services providers to include DNO's, planning authorities and landlords

The target of having a minimum of six ultra-rapid chargers on each site by the end of 2023 may not sound like a huge challenge but it is a momentous one due

to the practical issues involved even after a developer overcomes the first hurdle of planning permission.

For example, in many areas National Grid and Distribution Network Operators' (DNO) infrastructure isn't geared up for the requirements of EV charging. Together with our partners, Moto's ability to develop EV Hubs at its sites has been repeatedly curtailed by the need for significant improvements in the mains energy supply.

This is worsened by the lack of incentive for DNOs, who connect the power to the charging hubs, to prioritise such improvements. Looking at our own demand projections we strongly believe further ultra-rapid charging targets should be consulted on and set but that they should not only be placed on all motorway service areas and other rest areas on the strategic road network but also on Local Authorities and Distribution Network Operators (those that own and operate the power lines that connect the National Grid to charging points). We believe this will be key to galvanising faster progress and ensuring there is adequate charging facilities to meet 2030 demand.

Accelerate access to the £950m rapid charging fund for prohibitively expensive grid connections

While many grid connections for electric super hubs are now commercially viable and are already being progressed, grants for prohibitively expensive and commercially unviable grid connections offered through the £950 million rapid charging fund to support the rollout of at least 6,000 ultra-rapid charge points across England's motorways and major A-roads by 2035 are welcome. However whilst the fund was announced in March 2020, industry still desperately needs better guidance on how to get access to this money and quickly if we are to meet the timings required to secure adequate power and to install charging hubs in all the locations where they are needed.

Dramatically increase the UK's sustainable power to keep EV drivers moving

Linked to the issue of connection to power is the availability of power itself. In seven years time we expect EV charging in the UK will require twelve times as much energy than we currently use today. We would love to see more renewable energy coming onto the grid and are actively exploring the ways we can contribute to that through investing in solar farms and other renewable energy sources. We need Government to consider incentivising companies like Moto in the investment for solar farms and other initiatives.

Introduce both obligations and incentives for landlords to engage with those installing critical EV infrastructure

There is often little to no incentive for landlords to engage with site operators and others who are seeking to lease land on the site – for instance, charge point operators and DNOs – which, from our own experience has led to delay and extra cost. If there was a mechanism in place to help smooth this process we, and many others, could proceed faster.



GRIDSERVE are proud to be in partnership with Moto, at the forefront of delivering the charging infrastructure needed to provide a fantastic EV charging experience and support the mass adoption of electric vehicles in the earliest possible timeframes. We fully support all initiatives that will enable us to invest faster and deliver quicker – climate change isn't waiting for us, humanity needs to step up the pace.

Toddington Harper,
CEO at GRIDSERVE



Addressing the EV adoption cost barrier and increasing fairness

The EV revolution won't happen if electric vehicles aren't universally accessible. Currently, EV drivers are largely well-educated and employed in well paid jobsⁱⁱⁱ. However, swathes of people are being left behind, particularly those from lower income backgrounds.

What's more, the tough economic backdrop is affecting consumer buying choices in the short term and risks reducing widespread EV adoption. Some of the key mechanisms we believe must be deployed are to:



Reinstate the Plug-in Car Grant for more affordable models and extend it to used EVs

Despite the price being the greatest reason behind the lack of EV adoption, the Government has ended the last remaining subsidies for electric cars. In light of the tough economic backdrop it is essential that the subsidy is granted for cheaper models and extended to used EV models.



Scrap VAT on public chargers

As vast numbers of people are not able to charge at home, as they don't have a driveway or suitable on-street parking, they are being hit with a 20% tax penalty in the form of VAT – four times the amount as those charging at home. That is penalising many for circumstances outside of their control.



Introduce Vehicle Duty for electric cars in a slower and fairer way

We believe the Government should be encouraging and incentivising people to switch to EV not punishing them. The recent announcement that EVs will be subject to Vehicle Duty from 2025 kicks in precisely when many lower income families will be weighing up the pros and cons of a switch as the second-hand EV market becomes more established. It is unfair that yet again only new cars qualify for any relief or benefit beyond 2025.

Addressing the knowledge gap

A lack of clear, transparent, and readily available information about electric vehicle ownership is resulting in businesses and drivers holding back on committing to EVs due to the uncertainty they feel around its suitability^{iv}. This “knowledge gap” will continue to hinder EV adoption.

One of these myths is around range anxiety. A BVRLA (British Vehicle Rental and Leasing Association) survey reported 67% stating they did not live within five minutes of a public charge point. Yet it is inaccurate in 40% of those cases^v.

Some adoption guides to electric vehicles do exist, such as those published by the RAC and Energy Saving Trust. But more must be done to quell buyers’ concerns around tax, EV costs, average battery life, EV health & safety, MOT, costs of running, locations to charge, home charging, costs to rising energy bills and more.

The information available can be overly commercial, disparate, decentralised and, at worst, contradictory.

We recommend that a working group of industry representatives, motorist groups and Government should be formed to enable the development of a large-scale and accessible public awareness campaign on the practicalities, realities and benefits of EV ownership.

Conclusion

There are already myriad and significant reasons that are stopping more widespread adoption of electric vehicles. These include issues with planning, grid infrastructure, taxation and knowledge. EV charging operators and charge point providers alone cannot solve these challenges. A broad coalition of stakeholders, including industry figures, policymakers, DNOs, local councils, landowners and, sometimes, motorists themselves must come together to overcome the obstacles we face to greater EV adoption.

If we are to secure a strong, fair and accessible EV future for all then our Government must take action today.

References

ⁱ Page 35 https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/1065576/taking-charge-the-electric-vehicle-infrastructure-strategy.pdf

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ⁱⁱⁱ EV Box, June 2022, Electric car prices and uncertainty about charging availability remain the biggest obstacles to EV adoption in Europe. <http://bitly.ws/Dsau>

^{iv} Licence Bureau, March 2020, Licence Bureau warns of major knowledge gap as EV uptake set to surge. <http://bitly.ws/DsaB>

^v BVRLA, February 2022, BVRLA training courses can help with EV knowledge gap <http://bitly.ws/DsaB>



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