

Westminster Hall Debate:

Support for the UK's transition to electric vehicles by 2030



Context

- Facilitating a transition to EVs is essential to reaching net zero. The transport sector accounts for [31 per cent](#) of the UK's greenhouse gas emissions (2019 figures), and cars and vans account for over half of these emissions.
- EV sales are rising fast – this needs to be sustained. New data [shows](#) that fully battery electric cars now account for 19 per cent of cars sold. Less than half of cars sold are conventional (petrol or diesel) cars.
- Hybrid cars are taking up a large share of the market, but they only have a minimal impact on emissions. Plug-in hybrid cars produce [only 30 per cent less](#) CO₂ than conventional cars. Other hybrid cars (which use braking to generate electricity but are not charged) produce [only 20 per cent less](#) CO₂ than conventional cars.

Government commitments

- The government has announced a 2030 phaseout for petrol and diesel cars and vans.
- To deliver on this commitment, it has pledged to introduce a zero emission vehicle mandate (“ZEV mandate”). The mandate will be placed on cars as well as vans. The government will consult on the design of the mandate in early 2022 and implement the scheme from 2024.
- DfT is due to publish an Infrastructure Strategy this year or early next year, which will set out plans to expand charging infrastructure across the UK.

What needs to happen

ZEV mandate

- The government committed to introducing a ZEV mandate in its net zero strategy, as [Green Alliance called for](#) earlier this year. The mandate will set EV sale targets on car manufacturers, mandating that EVs account for a specific share of overall sales each year.
- By positioning the UK as a growing market for EVs, a ZEV mandate will promote investment in the UK's automotive industry, futureproofing jobs and increasing the UK's competitiveness with the European and global markets.
- To ensure the ZEV mandate delivers the emissions cuts needed this decade, Green Alliance recommends that the sale of hybrid cars and vans does not count toward sales targets set under the ZEV mandate. Furthermore, targets should be set in line with the CCC's recommendations for the sale of fully electric cars and vans this decade. The CCC recommends that fully electric cars make up half of new car sales by 2025, and almost all by 2030.

- Having a fast rollout of fully electric cars will ensure that lower income households benefit from cheaper, cleaner cars sooner. Fully electric cars are cheaper to maintain than conventional cars, and they are also cheaper to run, as owners do not pay fuel duty. Green Alliance [calculates](#) that for a new battery electric car bought today, its subsequent second hand owner will save between £700 and £2,300 compared to the owner of a second hand diesel or petrol equivalent, on a total cost of ownership basis.

Charging infrastructure

- The government must publish its Infrastructure Strategy and provide support and investment to local authorities to deliver the roll-out of charging infrastructure across the UK. This must be done at pace, to keep in line with rising EV sales and to give consumers the confidence to switch to EVs.

Critical materials

- To avoid over-reliance on critical materials used in EV batteries, like lithium and cobalt, the government should bring forward policy to ensure batteries can be easily recycled and repurposed, as recommended in Green Alliance's [recent report](#) on critical raw materials.

Going beyond EVs

- Green Alliance's [new research](#), published this week, shows that cutting traffic alongside the transition to EVs will help the UK meet its climate targets. To help drivers switch out of their cars, the government should provide greater investment in public transport and active travel infrastructure. This will help clean up our air, ease congestion, and create more liveable neighbourhoods.

Contact

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