

Update on EV Charging – August 2026

Installation of Fibre and existing Garo EV Charging System

We have continued to have issues getting Internet installed due to discrepancies in the Openreach database. We have thankfully managed to obtain a contact at Openreach (one of the Resident's has a cousin who happens to be the CEO). This kicked in a ticket with the Executive Complaints Team who seem to have resolved our issue.

An Engineer appointment has now been made with Openreach to complete the installation on Monday 10th August. We will then have the fibre cable installed between the Concierge Office and the Bin Store at No 17.

When this is complete, Prime (formally Roth) will commission Alltec to set the chargers up correctly and then hopefully resolve any issues with chargers.

When the system is set up correctly, power load management should work correctly, most issues should be automatically resolved, manual meter readings will no longer be required and meter readings will be available on a computer in the Concierge Office. This will not only provide easy meter readings, but also show any unauthorised EV charger usage.

I will also propose that passwords on all chargers are updated, preventing Owners/Residents from making changes to their own chargers (for example removing the requirement for Charger Cards to be used). This should prevent any unauthorised usage.

Bumblebee chargers and associated Grant

Lynsey is currently putting this on hold until the legal implications have been considered (as Ambassador still own the chargers). It seems Ambassador were not too happy with our suggestion that Prime simply give us some money to tear out the existing ones instead of completing the works (presumably as they have not yet fulfilled their Ambassador contract).

I personally still do not believe the Bumblebee offer is a suitable solution at this time due to the added costs they bring to usage. Usage is still pretty low amongst Owners and if there are concerns about the chargers being out-of-date, I would question whether the new ones would be considered out-of-date before many other Owner's become EV users. As a regular user of the chargers, I believe they are more than suitable – they just need to be set up correctly.

Lynsey has provided the following responses to our questions regarding the Bumblebee chargers.

1. Would the Bumblebee Chargers benefit from day / night rates? I guess the first question is - does the communal electricity account have a day rate and a night rate. Then if so, the next question is whether the Bumblebee Chargers are smart enough to know when the charging takes place (I know the current ones don't, but the Bumblebee ones are clearly newer) and whether their billing system can take that into account. I think this is important as a night rate would negate the additional cost of the Bumblebee 25p daily fee.

There are limited options for commercial tariffs at the moment and if there was, it would be difficult to monitor day/night usage. The charger is able to monitor plug in and plug out data, but we need more information from the vehicle which currently is the limitation. There is very little data coming back from the car. It's something we continue to monitor.

2. What is the current deadline for the Grant and can it be extended further? What are the requirements that need to be put in place by that deadline? Do we need to have signed a contract?

I have asked for an extension, I need to be able to confirm that the EV installer has been commissioned and then we will have a date provided by the EST funding that the grant is to be claimed by. In order to claim the funding the work has to be completed and they need to see the invoice from the installer.

3. What is the legal situation with Ambassador, given that they own the chargers at the moment. Can we just strip them out and replace them if they're not ours - if we can't, what kind of timescales might we expect to get around this and would that delay cause issues with the Grant?

I have asked Anderson Strathern this question, the guy that I have been dealing with is off on annual leave until next week.

4. How many people are currently using (and being charged for) the EV chargers?

I have 17 owners using the system at the present time.

*SE Edit: This does not include the 4 unauthorised users identified in July

5. Some members are keen to ensure we are looking at Best Value - did you do any comparison to other providers and if not, would it be possible to look into this?

We have used Bumblebee for a number of years and have always found them to be comparative. They are actually using one of their own brand as they are able to provide a cheaper option. They had provided a quote previously for Easee One chargers which was £690.00 per charger, however, their own brand is £569.00. However, if we are going down the route of proceeding with this, then we can certainly reach out to another contractor to show owners that we have obtained the best possible price.

The other option we have is the option we had floated before which is that we allow a company to install all the chargers for free, however owners that then wish to use the chargers pay the company a monthly cost (we had been quoted a figure of approx. £40.00 per month) owners that don't want to use the chargers won't be required to pay a monthly subscription. There would also be a 25-year lease that owners would need to sign.

6. How long would we be tied into the Bumblebee contract for?

They are not tied to Bumblebee, if we are referring to beecharged the billing platform, there is no tie in, but there must be unanimous vote to switch to another provider, we can't move individual Owners over to another platform, it has to be a collective.

7. If we were to stop our contract with Bumblebee at some point, would we then need to replace the chargers? I note the chargers all have Bumblebee written on them, so I'm assuming they're specific to them. I appreciate your FAQs say we will own them, but whether they will continue to work if we leave Bumblebee is a different question.

No, the units are manufactured by Nexblue and are OCPP compliant meaning should you revert to question 6, you can point the chargers to which ever platform you would like, Monta, Fuse etc.

8. The quote from Bumblebee has another discount - the OZEV Grant. This equates to £46,500 for 93 chargers and is more than the £20k grant you applied for. The letter should note the two grants that are included in the proposal.

The OZEV grant is an automatic grant that the government provides for every EV installation. I can note that on the letter if you think this is needed.

9. The quote is for 93 chargers but as per Simon's analysis there are 95 chargers not 93? How many are there? And how many owners do not own a space and charger?

I had always been advised that there was 88 owner's spaces that had chargers and 5 disabled, however @Simon Elkington if you have counted 95 then we can have the other 2 added to the quote.

*SE Edit: I have confirmed there are 95 spaces and Lynsey will look into this. I understand at least one property has more than one space, which may explain the difference.

10. Ambassador own the communal areas and all the current EV chargers. How can the Association replace them and who will own them once replaced?

Requesting information from Anderson Strathern about question 3 and the ownership and the fact that the DMS has not been conveyed to the Association.

11. The proposal doesn't appear to highlight the fact the proposed replacement of chargers is a capital expense and so MUST come out of the Reserve Fund in some way - it is not maintenance - which is as per your legal advice. So two options - a) just pay the amount out of the Reserve Fund and reduce the balance or b) bill a one-off special addition to the Reserve Fund that is immediately used for this purchase of EV chargers. What is your proposal?

Having reviewed the DMS, we noted that Rule 13 provides that payments from the Reserve Fund and certain decisions regarding improvements should ordinarily be determined at a General Meeting, therefore if we were to propose taking from the fund we would be require to hold an EGM.