Essex Highways

The Right Charger in the Right Place

Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy

Public Consultation Report

August 2023

SAFER GREENER HEALTHIER
Transforming travel in Essex

Essex County Council

Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy

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Executive summary

Essex County Council's new draft Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy aims to improve access to charging points in the county, supporting an increase in the uptake of electric vehicles and helping improve air quality. The strategy sets out a plan to help create a high-quality electric vehicle charging network and focuses on a simple vision of providing the 'right charger in the right place'.

To help refine and finalise the strategy, the council ran a public consultation from Thursday 15th June 2023 to Sunday 30th July 2023, which provided an opportunity for residents, businesses and other interested parties to provide feedback.

Presenting the vision, objectives and an action plan, a consultation brochure was created and provided information about the strategy, and the background to support this. The consultation was widely promoted across the county, and we received 743 survey responses, along with a further 36 email responses.

The overall response showed support for the strategy. In particular, the vision and objectives and action plan were given strong support. 44% strongly supported the overarching vision, while a further 31% supported it. The specific objectives of the strategy also received strong support, particularly those relating to social equality, reducing emissions to create a healthier environment, developing a resilient network and creating better places. Added to this, 25% strongly agreed with the action plan, while a further 41% agreed with it.

Respondents who offered negative comments tended not to criticise the strategy directly, but instead the notion of a switch to electric vehicles in general. This was particularly apparent in the responses received to the survey's open-ended questions.

The information will now be fed back to our project team for full consideration as we confirm and publish our strategy.

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1. Introduction

In Essex, 49% of CO2 emissions are from transport, and it is the largest contributor to poor air quality across any economic sector. Over half of these emissions come from cars and a third from heavy and light goods vehicles. The UK Government is phasing out the sale of new petrol/diesel cars by 2030 and plug-in hybrid vehicles by 2035 to accelerate the transition towards all new vehicles being zero-emission vehicles.

A switch to electric vehicles (EVs) can contribute to improving air quality and will play a role in delivering the net zero goal, however, access to a reliable, convenient, accessible, and fairly priced network of EV charge points will be required to facilitate this. Essex County Council is currently in the early stages of planning for EVs. To help achieve support a shift to EVs and meet our aims, we have developed a draft Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy which sets out what we want the charging network to look like in Essex and how we want it to be delivered by both the public and private sector.

The strategy focuses on what can be done in the next 2-3 years (up to 2025) to enable publicly accessible EV charge points in locations where:

- alternative and more sustainable modes of travel are limited, and car travel is necessary.
- there is little opportunity for private off-street charging.
- there are opportunities to integrate with sustainable travel.
- it is commercially unattractive to the private sector.

The strategy will be refreshed by 2025 to look at longer-term private car use and EV uptake.

There were over 18,500 registered BEVs (Battery Electric Vehicles) in Essex in 2022, and over 300 registered charge points. Using the Government's projections, uptake in Essex could potentially increase to 50,000 BEVs by 2025 and, looking beyond this strategy, 220,000 BEVs by 2030. In line with these projections, a minimum of 1,500 charge points could be needed in Essex by 2025 rising to 6,000 by 2030.

The responses collected from the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy public consultation are summarised in this report. They will help shape the electric vehicle charging network in Essex and inform the formal publication of our strategy document later in the year.

2. Methodology

Consultation on the strategy ran for six weeks, from Thursday 15 June 2023 to Sunday 30 July 2023. This was a non-statutory opportunity for feedback on the proposed Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy.

2.1 Methods of responding

Respondent to the consultation could respond in three ways:

- **Online survey:** Available on the Essex County Council consultation portal and via the project webpage.
- **By post:** Details in the consultation brochure and on the webpage enabled people to send in paper copies of the response form (at the back of the consultation brochure) or written responses to a FREEPOST address.
- **Email address:** A project email address was featured in the consultation brochure and on the website.

2.2 Survey

A consultation survey set out a mix of questions to assess levels of support for the strategy and allow wider feedback on EVs and EV uptake (see appendix A for a copy of the consultation survey).

The first section of the consultation survey contained questions which gathered quantitative and qualitative data about EVs. These assessed current EV use, likely future uptake, barriers to uptake and current parking situations.

The second section focused on the strategy itself, with questions assessing support for the overarching vision and objectives, and feedback on the action plan.

A further section focused on charge point use, asking for responses on the most important factors in using a public charging point and ascertaining the most popular locations for chargers.

A consultation feedback section was also included to help us evaluate the effectiveness of the consultation itself and inform future consultations. This contained questions covering how respondents became aware of the consultation and how helpful they found the information we provided.

Finally, we included personal information and demographic questions to improve our understanding of who had responded to a consultation and to help ensure the continued development of our equality and diversity monitoring. Where personal information was requested, we made clear the information provided was confidential, would be protected in line with our responsibilities under the GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and would be used solely for the purposes of the consultation.

2.3 Consultation materials

A consultation brochure (available at www.essexhighways.org/getting-around/driving/electric-car/ev-strategy) provided background to the strategy, why it is needed, how it fits within wider local transport strategies and what it proposes. It

also included a copy of the consultation survey. The brochure was available to view and download on the project webpage, while printed copies were made available upon request. Printed reference copies were also available to view at libraries in Basildon, Braintree, Brentwood, Canvey Island, Chelmsford, Clacton, Colchester, Dunmow, Epping, Harlow, Maldon and Rayleigh (one library per district).

2.4 Analysing the data

To analyse the qualitative feedback received from the survey, via email and written responses, an emergent coding approach was used. To enable this, a code framework was created, with every consultation response read and reoccurring themes and trends identified. This report covers the key themes and outcomes from the qualitative responses, as well as the quantitative data from the survey. Most responses presented as examples are as provided and have been anonymised for the purpose of this report, but please note that in some instances spelling and grammar have been corrected to ensure readability.

2.5 Promotion of the consultation

A variety of different communications channels were used to publicise the consultation as widely as possible across the county and encourage people to participate in reading and commenting on the strategy. A summary of the channels can be found below.

2.5.1 Our channels

Project webpage – The project website was the main landing page for all communications and signposted visitors to the consultation survey. The page included a summary of the strategy and background and directed to the consultation brochure which could be viewed, downloaded and printed via the page. It also featured an animation video, which was also used on social media.

Press release – A press release was issued to local media and trade press at the start of the consultation.

E-newsletters – Content about the public consultation was featured in the Essex Highways email newsletter (appendix B), which was delivered to 9,296 people who had subscribed to receive the latest Essex Highways news. The newsletter received 467 clicks. Articles were also included in the Your Essex and various district/borough/city council newsletters.

Emails to stakeholders – Emails were sent to identified organisations, groups and businesses across Essex at the launch of the consultation, and reminders were also provided during the consultation to encourage completion of the survey and request support in sharing information.

Social media – Content was posted on the Essex County Council and Essex Highways social media accounts (See appendix C). These posts focused on encouraging

participation in the consultation. Boosted Facebook posts were also used to reach a wider audience across Essex, including specific areas where there had been lower participation towards the end of the consultation. In total, boosted posts from the Essex Highways Facebook page reached about 60,000 people.

Advertising – Print, digital and social media advertising was booked with Newsquest and Reach to raise awareness of the consultation. This included quarter page print adverts in a number of newspapers across the county, including the Essex Chronicle, Basildon Echo, Epping Forest Guardian, Colchester Gazette and a number of weekly titles in north and mid Essex. Associated Facebook ads with Newsquest achieved 55,000 page impressions and a total social media reach of 183,370, with a further 75,000 page impressions from online display ads.

2.5.2 Partner channels

Partners and stakeholders were contacted in advance of the consultation to maximise reach and encourage information to be disseminated across their channels and networks.

A toolkit approach was taken with district/borough/city council partners, with key messaging, background, social media copy and images proved to enable councils to promote the consultation through their channels.

District/borough/city councils – Various district/borough/city councils helped promote the consultation via their social media channels, specifically retweeting Essex County Council posts. Many created their own social media posts with links to the project webpage or consultation survey. A number also mentioned the consultation and provided links to the survey within their e-newsletters.

Parish councils - Local parish councils featured the consultation on their websites and promoted it via their social media channels.

MPs – Various Essex MPs shared details of the consultation across their social media channels.

3. Data Analysis and Interpretation

This section presents the results from the consultation responses. This includes a summary of who responded, and analysis of the main themes and issues raised in the responses.

3.1 Sample

In total, there were 778 responses to the consultation. These included:

- 743 online survey responses
- 32 email responses

- 3 brochure survey responses received via email.

It should be noted this is a self-selecting sample, made up of those who have chosen to respond, and is, therefore, a non-scientific sample. Responses provide an insight into the concerns, themes and issues surrounding proposals, although this may be skewed towards a particular viewpoint and thus should not be considered a fully representative sample of the population.

As part of the public consultation, we encouraged identified stakeholders to provide a formal response. Organisations which responded via email included:

Basildon Borough Council / Black Notley Parish Council / Braintree District Council / Earls Colne Parish Council / Epping Forest District Council / Essex Highways Commissioning / Energy Saving Trust / Essex Sight Loss Council / Epping Forest District Council / Feering Parish Council / Great Maplestead Parish Council / Halstead Town Council / Littlebury Parish Council / Loughton Town Council / Runwell Parish Council / Tendring District Council / Thaxted Parish Council / Uttlesford District Council / West Bergholt Parish Council / Wickham Bishops Parish Council.

3.2 Response location analysis

To establish the level of response in each district, respondents were asked which area of Essex they lived in. All respondents answered this question. Table 1 shows the area with the most responses was Chelmsford (20%), followed by Braintree (14%) and Basildon (11%).

Table 1: Where respondents live

Where in Essex do you live?	Percentage
Basildon	11%
Braintree	14%
Brentwood	5%
Castle Point	1%
Chelmsford	20%
Colchester	10%
Epping Forest	3%
Harlow	2%
Maldon	6%
Rochford	4%
Tendring	5%
Uttlesford	10%
Other	9%

Respondent postcode data is shown in the heatmap below. Figure 1 shows there was a wide spread of responses received throughout the county, with a larger number of responses from urban areas.

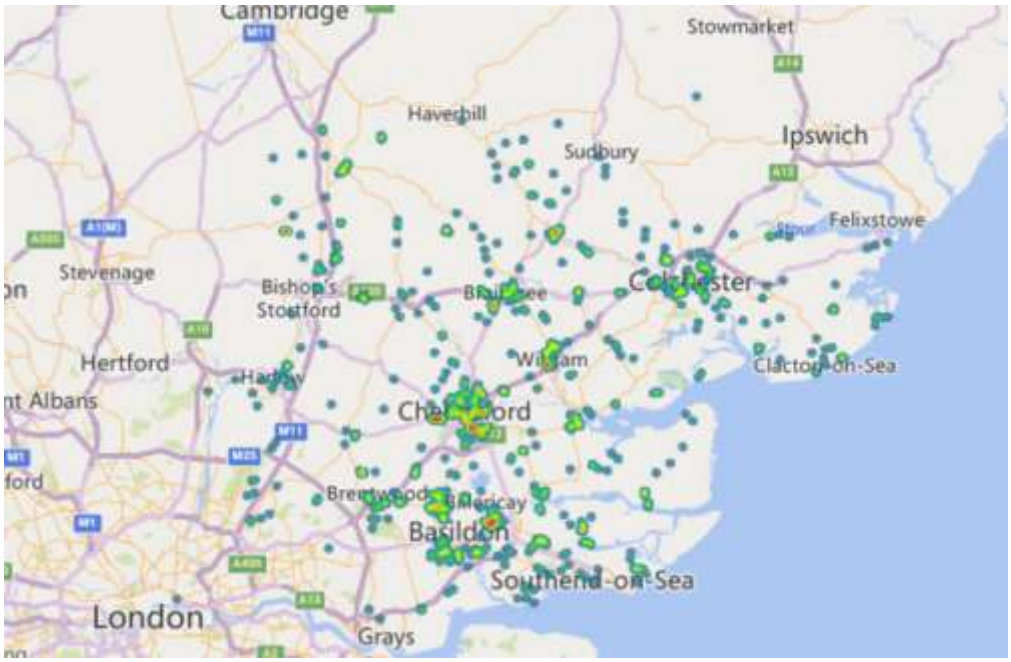


Figure 1: Response heat map of Essex

The following two maps show a closer view of responses from the north (figure 2) and south (figure 3) of Essex.

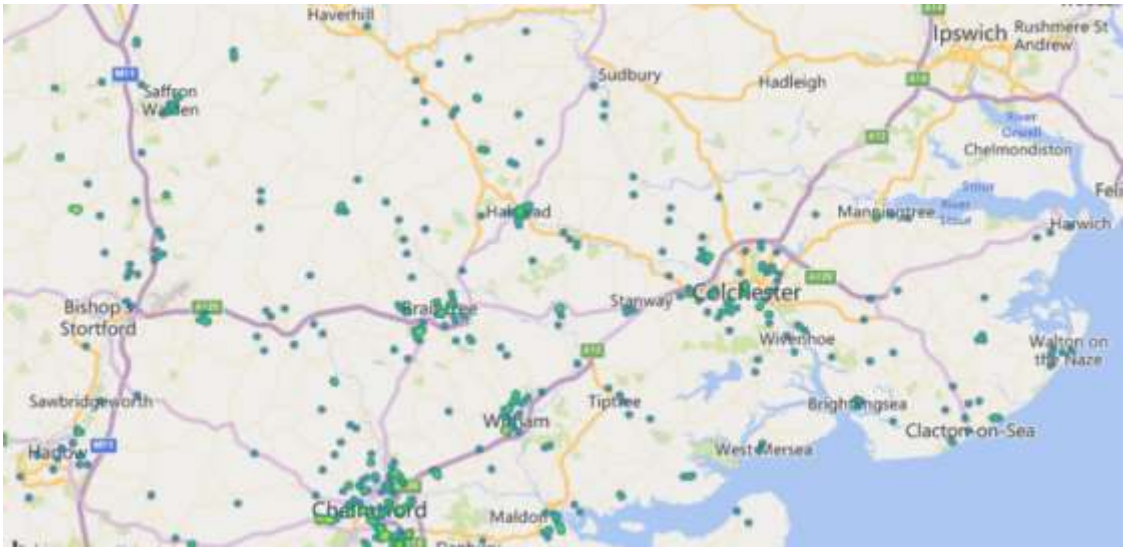


Figure 2: Response heat map of North Essex

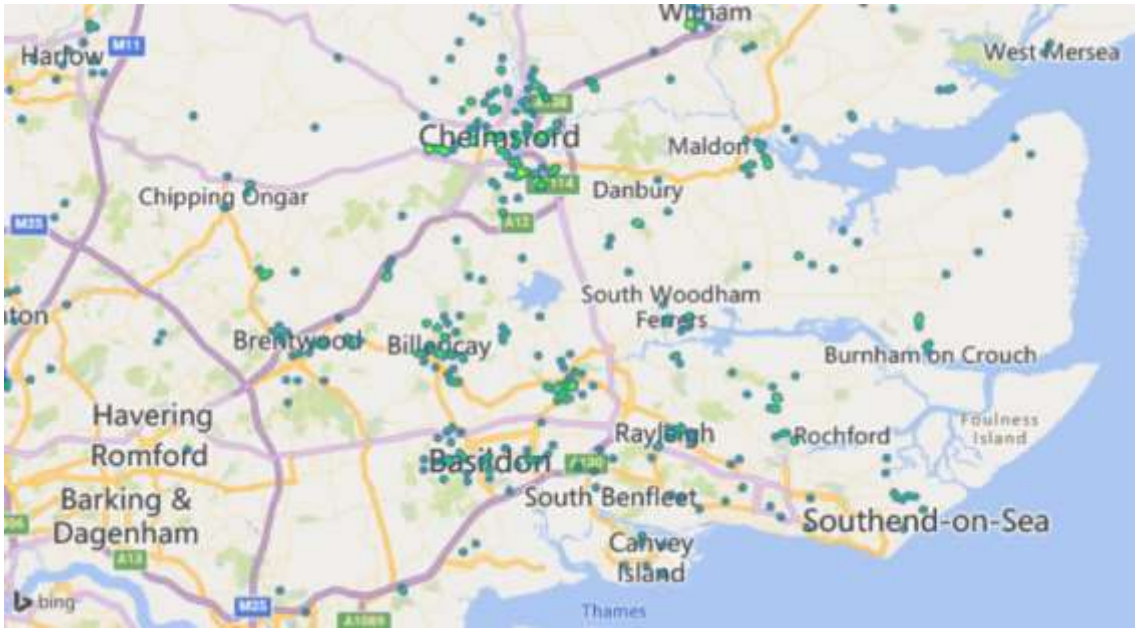


Figure 34: Response heat map of South Essex

3.3 Respondent data

3.3.1 Age

Most respondents gave their age, with only 1% not answering the question (Table 2). A further 6% preferred not to disclose this information. There were more responses from the 65+ age range (30%) than any other age group, followed by the 55-64 age range (21%) and 45-54 age range (20%). The fewest number of responses came from the younger age groups, with 1% from the under 18 age group and less than 1% from the 18-24 age group.

Table 2: Age of respondents

Option	Percentage
Under 18	1%
18 - 24	<1%
25 - 34	4%
35 - 44	11%
45 - 54	20%
54 - 64	26%
65+	30%
Prefer not to say	6%

3.3.2 Gender

A higher percentage of people who responded to the consultation survey indicated that they were male (58%), while 32% were female.

Table 3: Gender of respondents

Option	Percentage
Female	32%
Male	58%
Non-binary	<1%
Prefer not to say	6%
Prefer to self-describe	2%

3.3.3 Ethnic groups

Most respondents indicated their ethnic group (Table 4), with 9% not answering this question. The majority identified as White English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British (83%).

Table 4: Ethnic groups of respondents

Option	Percentage
Prefer not to say	9%
White	
English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	83%
Irish	1%
Gypsy/Irish Traveller	<1%
Any other white background	2%
Mixed/multiple ethnic origins	
White and Black Caribbean	<1%
White and Asian	3%
Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background	1%
Asian/Asian British	
Indian	1%
Pakistani	<1%
Any other Asian background	<1%
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British	
African	1%
Caribbean	<1%
Any other Black/African/Caribbean background	<1%

3.3.4 Health condition, disability, or impairment

Respondents were asked to indicate whether they considered themselves to have a health condition, disability, or impairment (Table 5). The majority (69%) indicated they had no impairment.

Table 5: Health condition, disability, or impairment

Option	Percentage
No impairment	64%
Hearing impairment/deaf	7%
Visual impairment/blind	2%
Deaf / blind	0%
Mental health needs	3%
Physical impairment	11%
Learning difficulties/disabilities	1%
Autism spectrum disorder	1%
Prefer not to say	7%
Other	4%

3.4 Current and future vehicle use

The next series of questions related to current vehicle use and how likely respondents were to switch to an electric vehicle in the future.

Respondents were asked where they currently park their vehicle at night to help us in gathering further data about potential future overnight charging needs. A majority (83%) use a private driveway/garage or park off-street (table 6).

Table 6: Current parking arrangements

Where do you currently park your car at night?	Percentage
Off-street – Private Driveway/Garage/Off-street	83%
Private Car Park Off-Street	4%
Public Car Park On-Street	10%
Don't own or have access to a vehicle	2%

When asked if they drive or have access to a hybrid or electric vehicle (table 7), just over half of respondents answered 'no' (55%), with 45% answering 'yes', showing we had a good mixture of responses from both existing EV drivers and non-EV drivers.

Table 7: Access to a hybrid or electric vehicle

Do you currently drive or have access to a hybrid or electric vehicle?	Percentage
Yes	45%
No	55%

For those who responded 'No' to the previous question, 34% indicated that they intended to switch to an EV in the future, while 33% did not. Over 40% did not answer this question, perhaps demonstrating a level of uncertainty.

Table 8: Likely to switch to an EV

If you answered no, are you likely to switch to an EV in the future?	Percentage
Yes, within the next year	2%
Yes, within the next 1-2 years	5%
Yes, I am likely to switch to an EV in 3 years+	17%
No, I do not intend to switch to an EV	33%
Not answered	43%

To expand on this point, respondents were given the opportunity to provide comments on why they did not intend to switch to an EV. There were 233 written responses to this section, with the main themes being 'EVs too expensive', 'insufficient driving ranges' and 'environmental/social concerns over EVs/EV production', particularly highlighting the potential moral issues over mining EV batteries and the use of rare materials.

A number of respondents also highlighted that the 'lack of charging points/poor infrastructure' was a reason why they would not switch, especially poor access to convenient public chargers, reiterating the need for this strategy.

EVs too expensive:

"Too expensive to purchase …"

"Why, if the government want us all to have EVs, are they so costly?..."

"Unaffordable…"

"Pricing is prohibitive. …"

Environmental/social concerns over EVs/EV production

"Data shows that switching to an EV will have very limited effects on climate change and possibly add to it in different ways, besides CO2."

"… limited rare earth materials to make them and uses child slavery in third world countries to mine."

"The environmental damage caused by manufacturing EVs."

"… unhappy with the fact that the batteries are not recyclable and go into landfill as a toxic waste."

Not enough charging points/poor infrastructure

"Poor charging infrastructure…"

"No facilities or access to be able to charge from house. Nearest public charger over ½ mile away."

"Concerns over lack of public EV points – especially in rural areas."

"… access to charging points on major routes is inadequate at the moment."

Driving range concerns

"… lack of mileage range."

"Relatively short mileage between charges."

"Current mileage of commercial EVs …"

3.5 Barriers to switching

Respondents were asked to consider whether they felt there were any current barriers to switching to an EV. The majority answered 'Yes' (96%).

Table 9: Barriers to switching to an EV

Do you think there are currently any barriers to switching to an EV?	Percentage
Yes	96%
No	4%

Presenting a list of barriers, they were then asked to rank their top three. Table 10 (below) shows the options presented to respondents and a ranked score based on the number of people who included the options as one of their top three. 'Purchase cost of electric vehicles', and 'Poor access to public electric vehicle charging points' were selected as the greatest barriers.

Table 10: Main barriers to switching to an EV

If you answered yes, what would you say are currently the main barriers to people switching to an electric vehicle?	Rank score
Purchase cost of electric vehicles	1.41
Poor access to public electric vehicle charging points	1.07
The driving range of electric vehicles	0.85
Access to charger at home	0.79
Unreliable network of charging points	0.73
Cost of charging electric vehicles	0.43
Timing concerns around charging electric vehicles	0.35

Accompanying comments primarily focused on concerns over a potentially negative environmental impact of EVs and EV production. Some respondents did focus on 'Poor access to chargers' as a barrier to switching to an electric vehicle, a concern already

reflected by the significant proportion of respondents who selected this barrier in the first section of this question (table 10). Within these further responses, many raised concerns over charger access for those without private, off-street parking. A small number of respondents also raised concerns over the 'Use of charging apps/need for data', criticising having to use a multitude of different charging apps for different chargers.

Concerns over environmental/social impact of battery production/disposal

"Concerned about the environmental impact of the global battery production system (and disposal) …"

"Use of scarce elements to make vehicle batteries is actually harmful to the environment and risks exploiting people in 3rd world countries."

"… killing the earth from mining for lithium ..."

"… Exhausted battery recycling not clear."

Concerns over environmental impact of EVs

"EVs are not environmentally friendly to produce…"

"The concept of EVs providing an environmentally friendly solution is completely flawed."

"… they are bad for the environment when looking at full lifecycle of product and components."

"Carbon footprint is terrible."

Poor access to chargers

"Essex is one of the worst counties in the UK for adoption of public and private charge points which are needed …"

"On street and destination charging is needed for those who don't have off street charging."

"Access to available public charging points …"

"The lack of charging points for those with homes that have on street parking only."

Use of charging apps/need for data

"… often there is no access to download apps if the area has bad internet connections."

"Elderly people can't do all via apps."

"Too many different brands of chargers all requiring a different app."

3.6 Charge point use

Alongside the barriers to EV use, understanding what consideration existing EV users have when choosing a charge point is important. Respondents were presented with a list of factors with 'Guaranteed availability of charging point' (86%) identified as the most important factor, followed by 'Speed of charge available' (83%) and 'Cost of charging' (82%).

Table 11: Factors determining charger use

Factors	Percentage				
	Very important	Important	Not important	Not at all important	No opinion
Cost of charging	50%	32%	5%	2%	7%
Distance from home	41%	25%	16%	3%	9%
Guaranteed availability of charging point	65%	21%	2%	1%	7%
Location of charging point in relation to other amenities	39%	34%	13%	2%	8%
Security of location	44%	34%	9%	2%	8%
Speed of charge available (i.e. rapid or fast)	56%	27%	4%	2%	7%

Of those who provided comments, a number highlighted other considerations ranging from reliability to the use of technology.

Other factors determining charger use

"Reliability – that the charging point is actually working, and a way of mapping where they are."

"Ease of payment process, for example will it be via an appr or a machine similar to car park payment machines."

"Method of payment (card payments acceptable, not apps …)"

"Limiting time to park to use the charger so that vehicles are not plugged in when others need to use the service."

"Somewhere to wait while charging."

Focusing on their likeliness to use charge points at specific types of locations, most respondents (78%) said they were likely to charge their EV at home. Supermarket/retail facilities were also widely selected (71%). Much fewer respondents felt that they would

charge at work (41%) or at a Park and Ride site (30%), although this would be determined by availability/ease of access to them. Currently, only 40% felt they would use public on-street charging.

Table 12: Likeliness to use specific types of charger locations

Factors	Percentage				
	Very likely	Likely	Unlikely	Very unlikely	No opinion
Charging at the workplace	29%	12%	12%	21%	20%
Community hubs	14%	32%	23%	13%	12%
Council-owned car parks	22%	38%	17%	10%	8%
Electric forecourt (e.g. Gridserve)	28%	34%	12%	9%	9%
Home charging (using your own power supply)	70%	8%	3%	7%	7%
Park and Ride	9%	21%	26%	25%	11%
Public on-street charging	15%	25%	25%	19%	9%
Supermarkets, retail facilities etc.	31%	40%	10%	6%	8%
Visitor attractions or destinations	33%	34%	10%	8%	10%

3.7 Vision and objectives

Looking at the strategy document in more detail, respondents were asked to consider the overarching vision for the strategy (to deliver “the Right Charger in the Right Place”), the objectives set out to achieve it and their level of support.

The majority (75%) indicated a level of support for the overarching vision.

Table 13: Support for overarching vision

Level of support	Percentage
Strongly support	44%
Support	31%
Oppose	7%
Strongly oppose	11%
No opinion	7%

When asked to indicate the extent to which they agreed with each of the objectives for the strategy, Table 13 shows that generally respondents were supportive.

While gaining 66% support (36% strongly agree and 30% agree), the objective which received the lowest level of support was the one highlighting the aim of reducing unnecessary car use.

Table 14: Agreement with strategy objectives

Objectives	Percentage				
	Strongly agree	**Agree**	**Disagree**	**Strongly disagree**	**No opinion**
Social equality: accessible, inclusively designed and fairly priced network for all	50%	30%	3%	10%	7%
Healthy environment: reducing emissions from transport and improving air quality	51%	29%	6%	11%	4%
Resilient and safe network: reliable, accessible, safe, compatible and easy to use	55%	26%	4%	10%	5%
Integrated network: complementing increased sustainable travel choices and the reduction of unnecessary car use	36%	30%	13%	16%	6%
Connected network meeting essential demand: connecting individuals and businesses to support the uptake of electric vehicles	36%	33%	10%	14%	8%
Creating better places: placing EV charge points to complement our public spaces and minimise negative impacts	50%	27%	6%	12%	5%

Accompanying comments on the vision and objectives were a mix of positive and negative. There were suggestions made on new objectives and some respondents felt that the strategy did not provide enough information/detail. A number of respondents also questioned how collaboration with businesses/charger providers/local authorities would work in practice.

General positive comments

"We fully support the vision and strategy…"

"The vision and objectives are likely to be shared by many…"

“It’s about time this was considered. maybe should have done this 5 years ago to be ahead of the curve. However, charging technology is now much better and more reliable”

“It is excellent progress. Chargers need to be much more accessible and more widely available and numerous…”

General negative comments

“Totally impractical at the present time.”

“Limited value, unlikely to improve the environment. Will impact the poorest in society.”

“There is no need to bring in all these unwanted changes and measures to disrupt and destroy people's lives and close businesses…”

“Don’t waste our money on what I believe is an unachievable target.”

Support vision/positive vision comments

“I support them whole-heartedly.”

“No one will disagree with the 'Vision', the issue will be how you get there…”

“The vision sounds good.”

“I welcome district or county levels of government having this strong vision …”

Unsupportive of vision/negative vision comments

“The vision is misplaced along the with the current rush to net zero …”

“The visions are very boxy and only work in parts of the county …”

“…it seems to lack actual activity and detail. It also focuses on meaningless figures such as "number of charge points". For example, cable gullies so people can use their own home charger on the street wouldn't feature in this figure…”

“I don’t think it is a practical aim to expect a huge change to electric vehicles …”

Support objectives

“The objective is well meaning but is not the responsibility of the council.”

“We strongly agree with social equity objectives – we have had numerous EV charging requests and queries from social housing tenants … at homes where charging off street is impossible.”

"…I think the policy of supporting areas where there is no public transport and no commercial viability is good and targeting of the hospitality / leisure industry could play a key part in achieving your goals."

"The objectives set out all seem very sensible …"

Issue with specific objective

"… despite noting 'disagree' to 'social equality', I agree with the broad objective, just not some of the potential detail. Subsidising or installing charging points on residential streets doesn't really seem to fit the description of equality … they need to be genuinely available to everyone …"

"The objectives around public transport alternatives are not bold enough … services need to be transformed so radically …"

"… wary of the objective to complement, 'increased sustainable travel choices and the reduction of unnecessary car use' … often car use is essential to the lifestyles people lead .. it is vital ECC's transport policies respect the preference for cars most people have …"

"… The supporting objectives lack ambition on home charging which is currently limited by an Essex County Council's own dropped kerb policy written in 2009. Action on this policy would potentially net tens of thousands more home charging points. …"

Suggestion for new objective/ improvement or achieving objective

"Vision and objectives are fine but should include a strategy for delivery of a robust infrastructure to support electric vehicle charging …"

"… targeting of the hospitality/ leisure industry could play a key part in achieving your goals."

"… need to hone in on key targets to deliver by a specific timeframe."

"… There needs to be an objective around access to fast/rapid chargers for non-Essex residents in our country."

Issues with detail provided

"… It is unclear how the availability and reliability of chargers can be guaranteed"

"… I think there needs to be more proof on environmental impact and more investigation overall. …"

"There is no indication of the disruption which will be caused by the installation of kerbside charging points, or of how the necessary increase in electricity capacity is to be introduced. …"

Collaboration with businesses/charger providers/local authorities

"… my concern is that local authority new housing development teams do not have the budget and willingness to implement any such strategy …"

"… there needs to be incentivised measures for landlords of industrial estates to install charging points for employees …"

"The provision of charging points should not be the work of a local authority … do local authorities build and maintain petrol stations?"

Look at other options and technologies (hydrogen, e-fuel, hybrid)

"There is a place for electric vehicles but there are other alternatives such as hydrogen. …"

"… With the potential for hydrogen e-fuels to develop over the next decade, spending a fortune building a massive electrical infrastructure seems a massive gamble. …"

"There should also be thought into other fuel sources such as hydrogen/water and biofuel as a lot of people will not be able to afford the purchase of EV vehicles. …"

3.8 Action plan

Considering the proposed action plan, respondents were asked to indicate their level of agreement with the measures included in the action plan. Most respondents (66%) indicated support for the measures.

Table 15: Agreement with action plan

Overall, to what extent do you agree with the measures included in the action plan?	Percentage
Strongly agree	25%
Agree	41%
Disagree	10%
Strongly disagree	12%
No opinion	11%

Comments provided on the action plan were mixed. Those specific to the action plan felt they needed more information or details on costs. Some raised specific questions about the action plan, while there were also concerns about the timeframe and ability to deliver quickly.

A number of comments also focused on where chargers should be specifically located and the importance of ensuring that enough chargers were provided.

More generic comments focused on priorities and that time/funding should focus on maintenance issues. Following similar responses to those previously highlighted, there were also a number of comments in relation to concerns/opposition to EVs in general.

General positive comments on action plan

"It is great to see progress on this …"

"Can't wait to see the progress."

"The action plan seems very sensible! I suspect vans and lorries will take longer to electrify."

General negative comments on action plan

"…badly flawed by the cost and implementation of the scheme!"

"No, all a load of rubbish once people realise electric cars and the batteries are unsustainable …"

"It is a ridiculous plan that has been cobbled together to suit an agenda which is not that of those who elected you. It is unsustainable long term and is a way of forcing control on your constituents and making companies selling this richer."

Questions on/suggestions for action plan

"What about the cost to set it up?"

"… I think measures need to be put in order of priority as there are a lot of measures."

"Perhaps more of an emphasis on car clubs so that we're not simply replacing all ICE cars with EVs."

"Allow E scooter and E bikes and get free parking on the outskirts – within 15 min walk of the city. …"

"Ensure that the charging points are all the same type and have working Wi-Fi for payment app."

Achievability concerns of action plan

"So very unlikely that you will achieve it – you miss pretty much every other target set these days."

“I don’t know how this is going to happen because I don’t think that it is logistically possible …”

“The measures seem very extensive for a year and a half. …”

Taking too long to deliver/speed important

“It must be rolled out fast to make people feel confident to drive an EV and be able to charge it quickly and without panic wondering where they can access a charger.”

“Nothing other than it’s long overdue.”

“Get on with it and do it. It needs to be delivered on time or early.”

Lack of specific deliverables in strategy/missing information

“Whilst it quotes climate change objectives, it disregards the particles flying off the wearing tyre, breaks and road surfaces …”

“Nothing in here about payment methods. For as long as you need a different app for every charging point, I’m stuck on petrol mode in my car. …”

“Difficult to understand what the priorities are and how it is funded.”

Comments on where to position chargers/fast chargers

“On street charge points i.e., lampposts should be rolled out quickly.”

“I do not want to see street and public places filled with charging points – if we must they should be one type of charger only not various. They should not ‘blight’ the landscapes either.”

“Focus on destination charging first. …”

“I would like to see EV charging points in the car parks of village halls and community facilities. For example, it would be really helpful to have two EV charging points in Berden Village Hall car park …”

Comments on providing enough chargers

“… I can’t see how there will be enough chargers for everyone.”

“If EV’s are to replace petrol/diesel then they have to be as easy and quick to re-charge with as many charging points as they are public fuel pumps.”

“There has to be a reliable, easily accessible charging network. … There should be many multiples of these chargers in all car parks and residential streets where off-street parking isn’t an option.”

"The charge points need to be in sensible locations in sufficient quantity."

Concerns over/against EVs

"EVs are too heavy for our roads. …"

"EVs are not green, the pollution made by mining, transportation of raw materials and the manufacture of so-called green products (i.e. solar PV panels)."

"… If it was not for the fact I have a company electric car, I would not be able to afford one like most of the residents I imagine."

3.9 Consultation feedback

As customary with public consultations, feedback was collected on the consultation to guide improvements for future projects. Online channels were identified as the primary way in which people found out about the consultation, accounting for 83%.

Table 16: How did you hear about this public consultation?

How did you hear about this public consultation?	Percentage
Social media	28%
Email newsletter	35%
Online	8%
Email	20%
Word of mouth	7%
Newspaper advert	<1%
Newspaper article	1%
Other	4%

When asked how helpful they found the information provided as part of the consultation, the majority of respondents (71%) found the information provided either 'Very helpful' or 'Fairly helpful', reflecting positively on the consultation (Table 17). Only 7% found the information 'Fairly unhelpful' or 'Very unhelpful'.

Table 17: How helpful was information provided?

How helpful was the information we provided to you as part of this public consultation?	Percentage
Very helpful	28%
Fairly helpful	43%
Neither helpful nor unhelpful	22%
Fairly unhelpful	4%
Very unhelpful	3%
Not answered	1%

3.10 Email responses

35 email responses to the consultation were received, which did not follow the structure of the survey. Therefore, a separate coding framework was used to analyse these responses to cover the variety of comments provided.

Feedback was received from members of the public, local councils, and organisations. The email responses raised a relatively high number of diverse comments, however, some of the common themes throughout reflect those seen across the open-ended responses collected from the consultation survey. It is also important to note that three email responses included very similar comments. While these have been analysed as separate responses, they reflect almost the exact same codes.

The most common theme was ‘more detail needed in strategy/concerns for information provided’. Comments coded as ‘Collaboration with businesses/charger providers/local authorities’ came from local councils or organisations, asking specifically how they could collaborate with Essex County Council to progress and ultimately help deliver the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy. This collaboration is key, and it is promising to see this willingness to engage with the strategy at such an early stage. However, there are also some concerns about who would be responsible for the chargers and what part Essex County Council would play in the collaboration with providers and other councils.

More detail needed in strategy/concerns for information provided

“As acknowledged in the Strategy, the delivery of EV charging infrastructure also needs to be put in context.”

“… There is little mention of place-making and the need to consider location and design of facilities as well as installation and maintenance. …”

“… these appear to be broad strategic objectives … rather than ones focused on the deployment of resources for the delivery and maintenance of a future EV charging network. …”

Collaboration with businesses/charger providers/local authorities

“.. In order to deliver on the overall aim of delivering a step change in EV charging infrastructure and to ensure there are the ‘chargers in the right place’ in the district, it will require a productive working partnership between Essex CC and the district council. …”

"… I look forward to working with you on the project in the near future. …"

"The District has declared a climate emergency and pledged to support communities within the District to reduce the impacts of climate change."

4. Conclusion

The consultation provided a valuable insight into views on the draft Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy.

In total, we received almost 800 responses to the consultation, including a fairly even split of existing EV users and people who do not currently own or have access to an EV. Therefore, the consultation has provided us with a good overview of the views of both, including the challenges facing existing EV drivers and the potential barriers for those who have not switched to an electric vehicle. Other than the purchase cost of EVs, access to public charge points was identified by respondents as the next most significant barrier to switching to an EV overall, emphasising the need for more charge points and our charge point strategy.

The quantitative results showed support for the strategy, particularly in relation to the vision, objectives and action plan. The overarching vision was supported by 75% of respondents (see Table 12). The six specific objectives proposed were also well supported, as seen in Table 13, with the majority responding positively. The specific measures outlined in the action plan were well supported, with 66% of respondents either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the measures set out (Table 14).

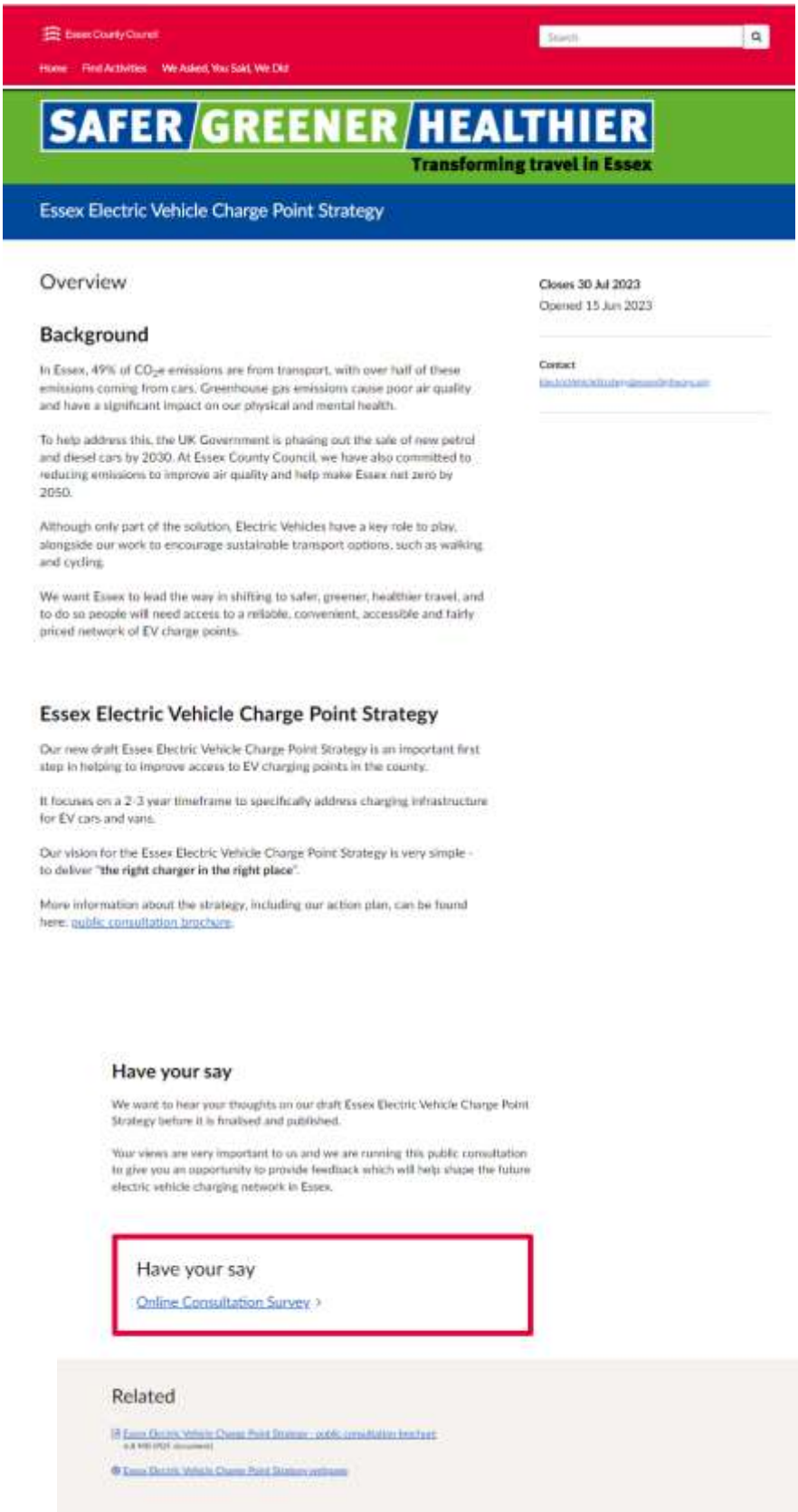
The qualitative responses explored the findings in more detail. There was considerable support for the aims and ambition of the strategy, with respondents highlighting the need for a charge point strategy and the need to focus on helping to meet the net-zero target. However, there was some general opposition both to electric vehicles and the requirement to switch to them. Common themes were concerns over EV capability/price and the potential environmental implications of producing electric vehicles, especially regarding their batteries.

Some respondents also felt that the strategy did not go into enough detail regarding costings or evidence on how the strategy would work with local councils and private companies, and how effective EVs are in achieving environmental targets. Others highlighted that the council should focus on road maintenance rather than looking at wider strategic issues.

A key discussion point was how access to charging could be provided to those without off-street parking. A number of respondents offered ideas to aid this, such as ways to allow private cables to run over pathways or reviewing drop-kerb policies. Easy access to chargers was shown to be important, as was usability of the charging points in regard to accessibility or the use of apps.

5. Appendices

Appendix A – Consultation survey



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SAFER GREENER HEALTHIER

Transforming travel in Essex

Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy

Overview

Closes 30 Jul 2023

Opened 15 Jun 2023

Contact

Background

In Essex, 49% of CO_2e emissions are from transport, with over half of these emissions coming from cars. Greenhouse gas emissions cause poor air quality and have a significant impact on our physical and mental health.

To help address this, the UK Government is phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030. At Essex County Council, we have also committed to reducing emissions to improve air quality and help make Essex net zero by 2050.

Although only part of the solution, Electric Vehicles have a key role to play, alongside our work to encourage sustainable transport options, such as walking and cycling.

We want Essex to lead the way in shifting to safer, greener, healthier travel, and to do so people will need access to a reliable, convenient, accessible and fairly priced network of EV charge points.

Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy

Our new draft Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy is an important first step in helping to improve access to EV charging points in the county.

It focuses on a 2-3 year timeframe to specifically address charging infrastructure for EV cars and vans.

Our vision for the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy is very simple - to deliver "**the right charger in the right place**".

More information about the strategy, including our action plan, can be found here: public consultation brochure.

Have your say

We want to hear your thoughts on our draft Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy before it is finalised and published.

Your views are very important to us and we are running this public consultation to give you an opportunity to provide feedback which will help shape the future electric vehicle charging network in Essex.

Have your say

Online Consultation Survey >

Related

5. Are you happy to be contacted by email about the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy in the future?

(Required)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

6. Are you responding on behalf of a business or organisation?

(Required)

- ○ Yes
- ○ No

7. If yes, what is the name of the business or organisation?

Business or organisation

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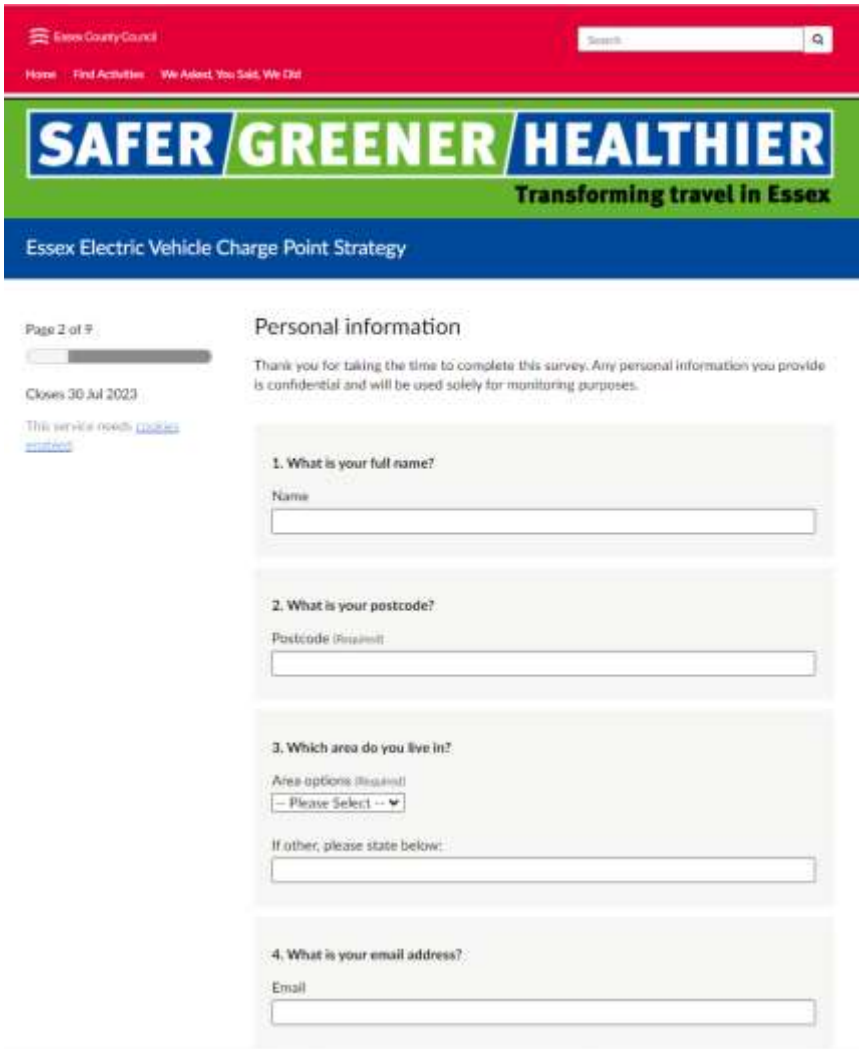

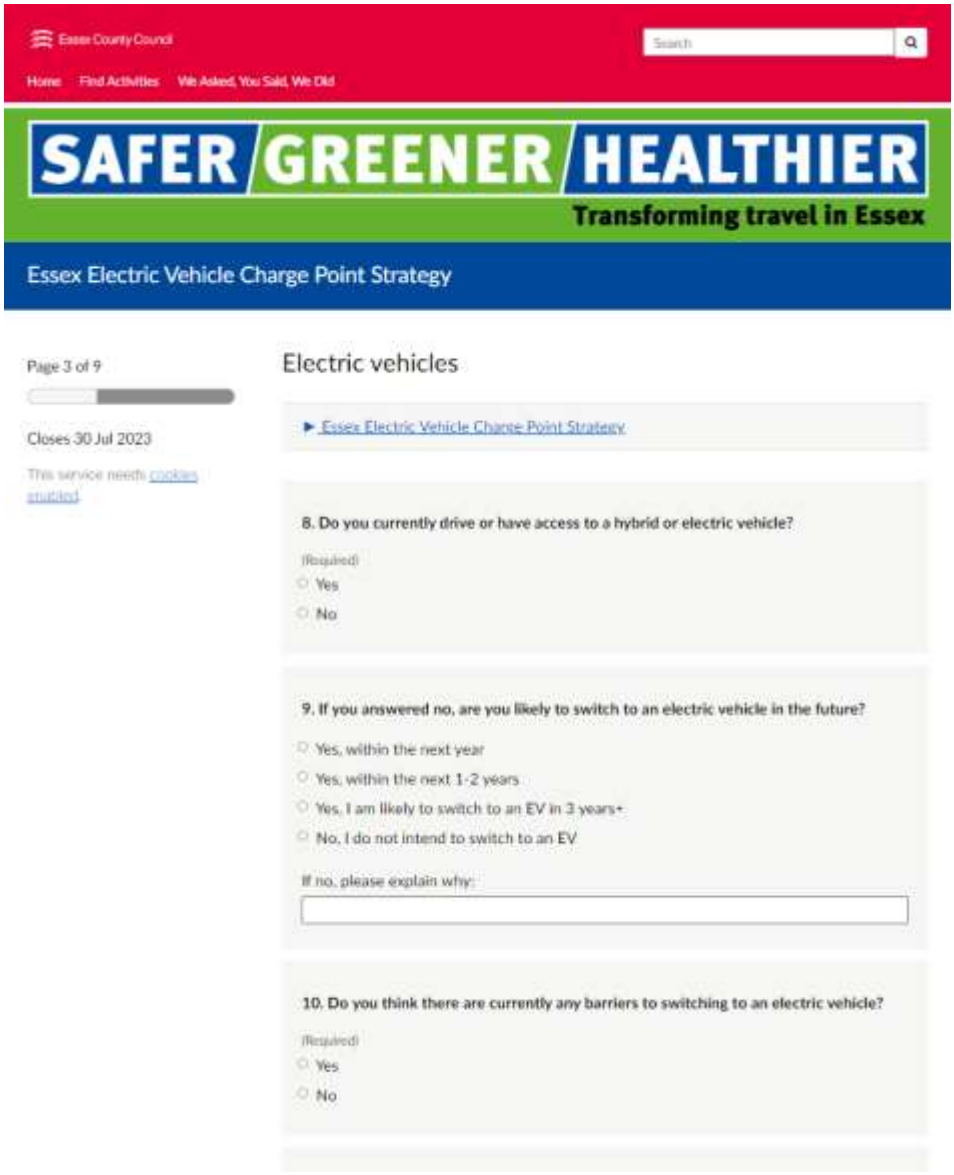
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Electric vehicles
Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy
8. Do you currently drive or have access to a hybrid or electric vehicle?
(Required)
Yes
No
9. If you answered no, are you likely to switch to an electric vehicle in the future?
Yes, within the next year
Yes, within the next 1-2 years
Yes, I am likely to switch to an EV in 3 years+
No, I do not intend to switch to an EV
If no, please explain why:
10. Do you think there are currently any barriers to switching to an electric vehicle?
(Required)
Yes
No

11. If you answered yes, what would you say are currently the main barriers to people switching to an electric vehicle? Please rank your top three (1 = most significant barrier)

Access to charger at home	-- Please Select --
Cost of charging electric vehicles	-- Please Select --
Poor access to public electric vehicle charging points	-- Please Select --
Purchase cost of electric vehicles	-- Please Select --
The driving range of electric vehicles	-- Please Select --
Timing concerns around charging electric vehicles	-- Please Select --
Unreliable network of charging points	-- Please Select --

If you think there are any other significant barriers, please specify.

12. If you or someone in your household drives, where do you currently park your vehicle at night?

- Off-street - Private Driveway/Garage/Off-street
- Private Car Park Off-street
- Public Car Park On-street
- Don't own or have access to a vehicle

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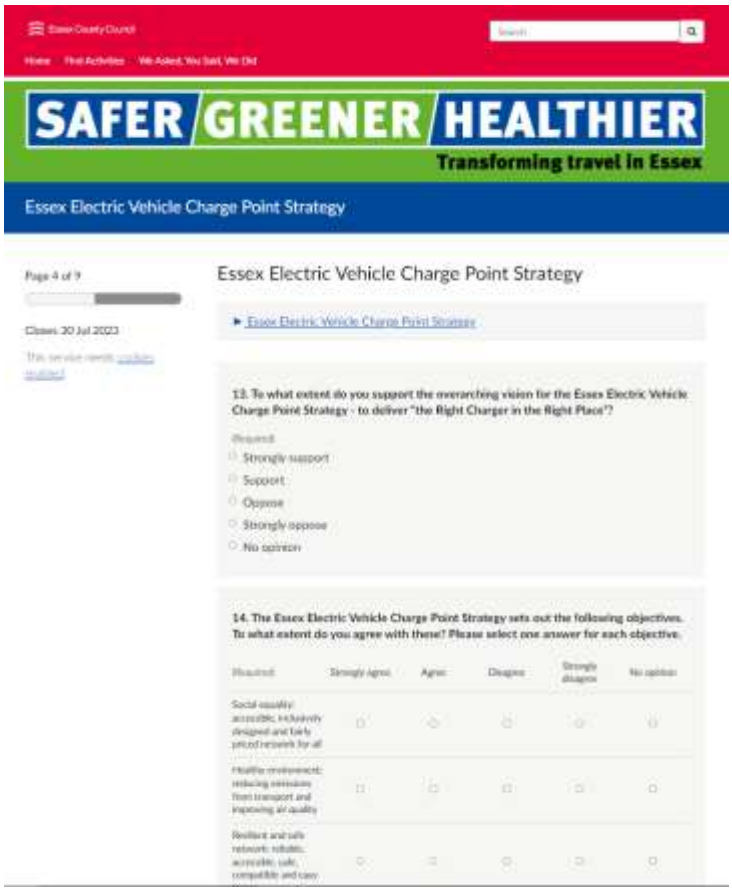

Resilient and safe network: reliable, accessible, safe, compatible and easy to use	○	○	○	○	○
Integrated network complementing increased sustainable travel choices and the reduction of unnecessary car use	○	○	○	○	○
Connected network meeting essential demand: connecting individuals and businesses to support the uptake of electric vehicles	○	○	○	○	○
Creating better places: placing EV charge points to complement our public spaces and minimise negative impacts	○	○	○	○	○

15. Do you have any comments on the vision and objectives set out in the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy?

16. The Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy sets out an action plan containing a series of measures we can deliver up to 2025 to help improve the electric vehicle charging network in Essex. Overall, to what extent do you agree with the measures included in the action plan?

- ○ Strongly agree
- ○ Agree
- ○ Disagree
- ○ Strongly disagree
- ○ No opinion

17. Do you have any comments about the action plan or any of the measures included within it?

18. Do you have any further comments about the Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy?

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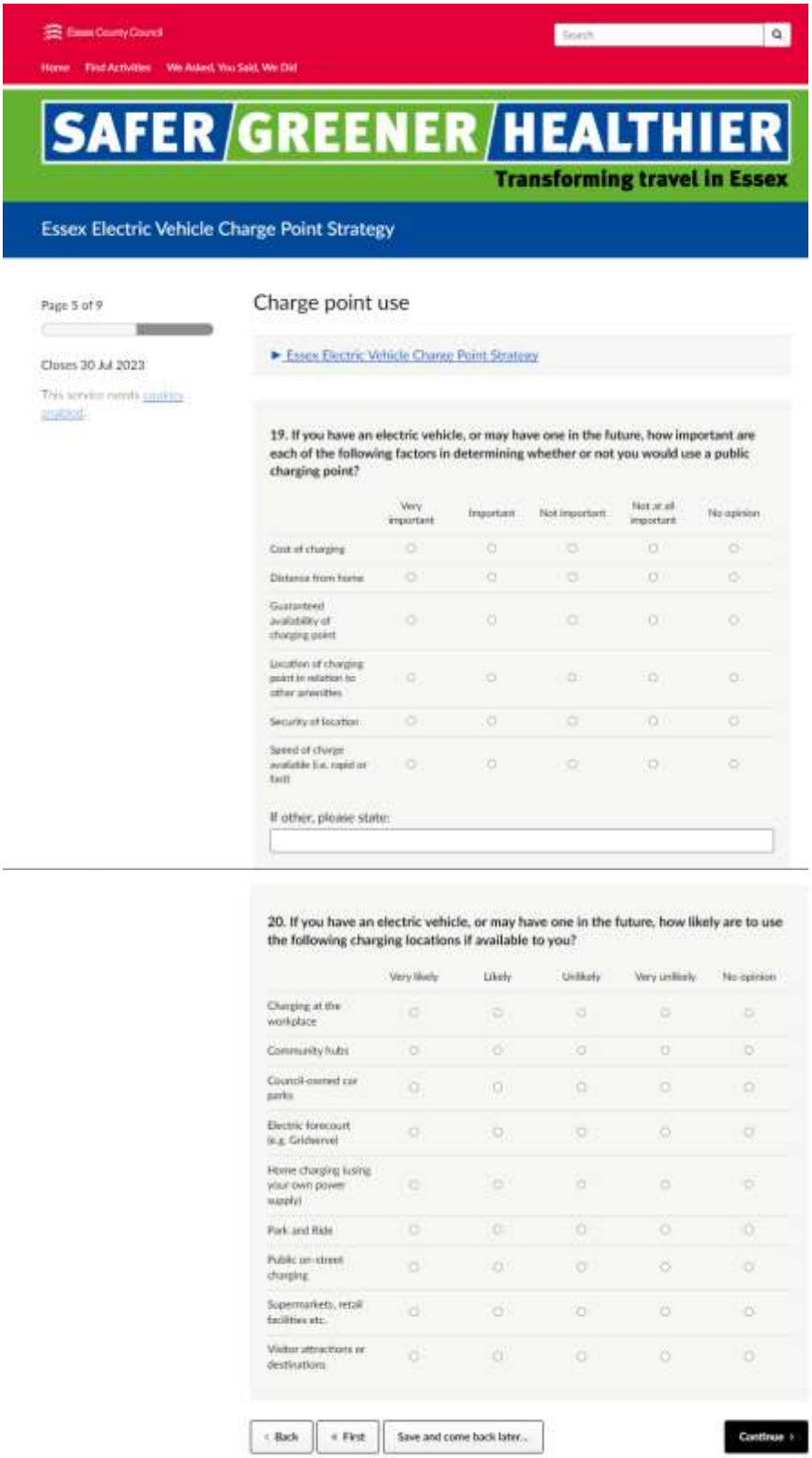
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Charge point use
► Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy
19. If you have an electric vehicle, or may have one in the future, how important are each of the following factors in determining whether or not you would use a public charging point?
Very important
Important
Not important
Not at all important
No opinion
Cost of charging
Distance from home
Guaranteed availability of charging point
Location of charging point in relation to other amenities
Security of location
Speed of charge available (i.e. rapid or fast)
If other, please state:
20. If you have an electric vehicle, or may have one in the future, how likely are to use the following charging locations if available to you?
Very likely
Likely
Unlikely
Very unlikely
No opinion
Charging at the workplace
Community hubs
Council-owned car parks
Electric forecourt (e.g. Gridserve)
Home charging (using your own power supply)
Park and Ride
Public on-street charging
Supermarkets, retail facilities etc.
Visitor attractions or destinations
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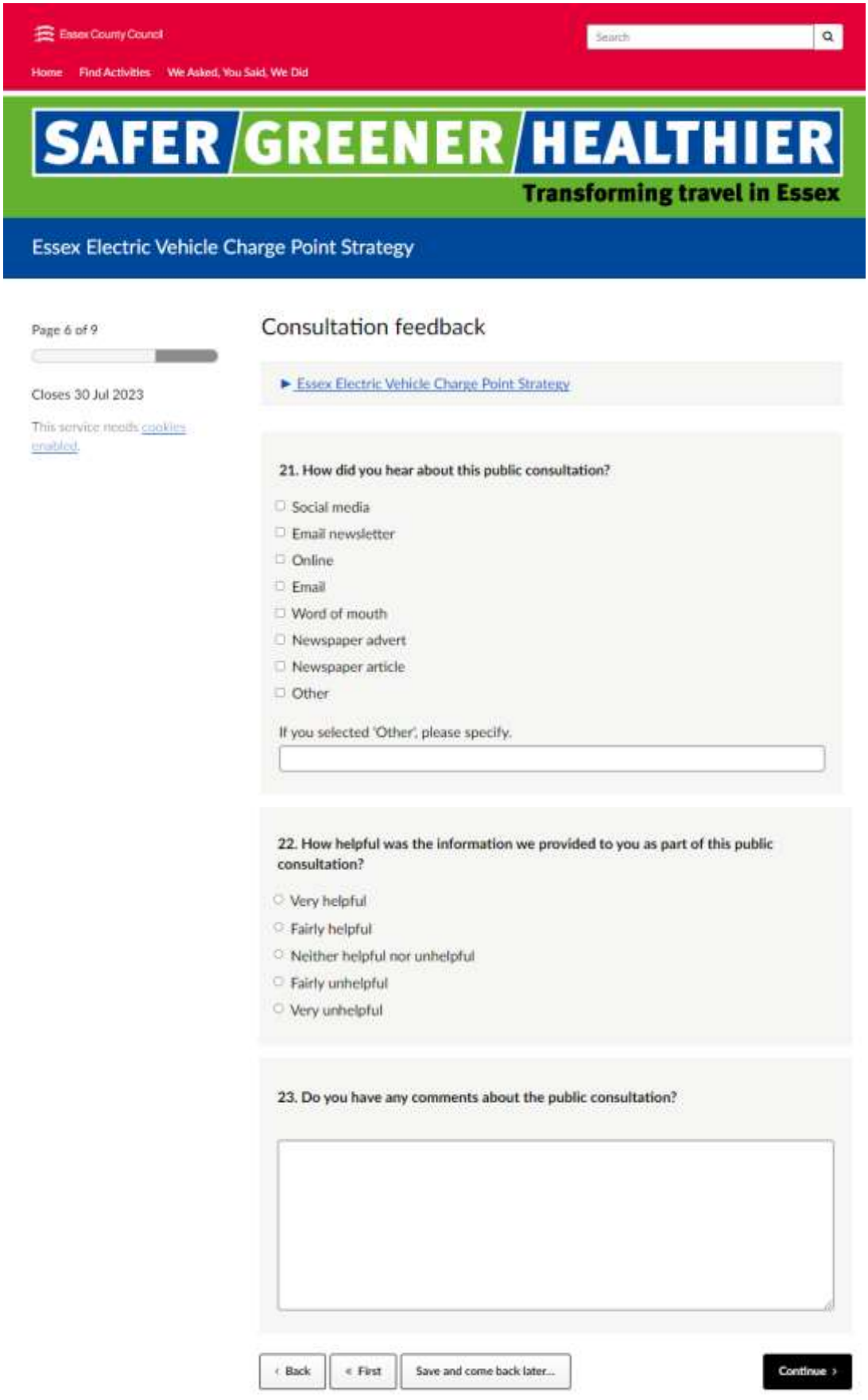
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Consultation feedback
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21. How did you hear about this public consultation?
Social media
Email newsletter
Online
Email
Word of mouth
Newspaper advert
Newspaper article
Other
If you selected 'Other', please specify.
22. How helpful was the information we provided to you as part of this public consultation?
Very helpful
Fairly helpful
Neither helpful nor unhelpful
Fairly unhelpful
Very unhelpful
23. Do you have any comments about the public consultation?
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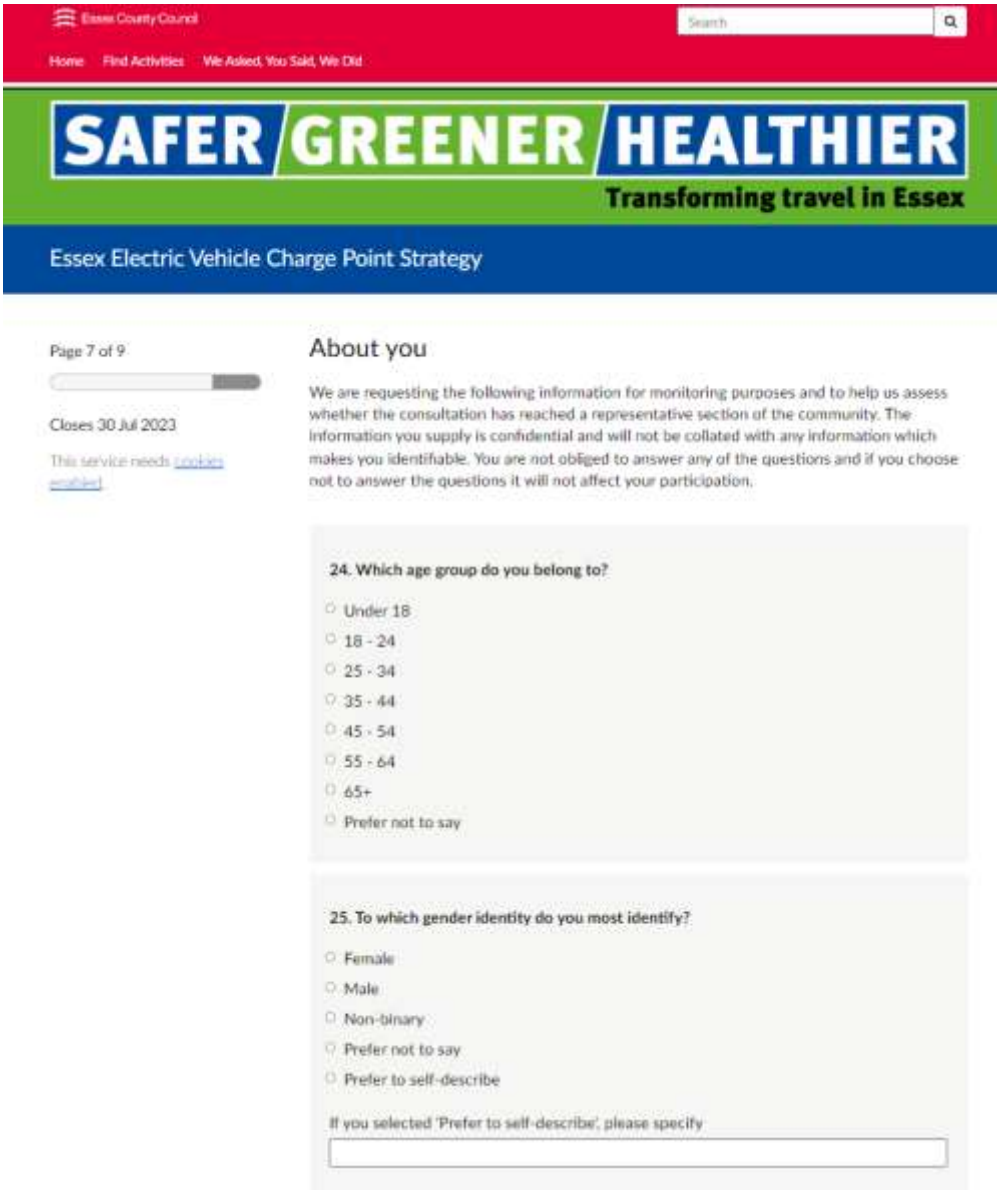
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About you
We are requesting the following information for monitoring purposes and to help us assess whether the consultation has reached a representative section of the community. The information you supply is confidential and will not be collated with any information which makes you identifiable. You are not obliged to answer any of the questions and if you choose not to answer the questions it will not affect your participation.
24. Which age group do you belong to?
Under 18
18 - 24
25 - 34
35 - 44
45 - 54
55 - 64
65+
Prefer not to say
25. To which gender identity do you most identify?
Female
Male
Non-binary
Prefer not to say
Prefer to self-describe
If you selected 'Prefer to self-describe', please specify

26. To which of these ethnic groups do you consider you belong?

Asian/Asian British

- ○ Bangladeshi
- ○ Chinese
- ○ Indian
- ○ Pakistani
- ○ Any other Asian background

If you selected 'Any other Asian background', please describe.

Black/African/Caribbean/Black British

- ○ African
- ○ Caribbean
- ○ Any other Black/African/Caribbean background

If you selected 'Any other Black/African/Caribbean background', please describe.

Mixed/multiple ethnic origins

- ○ White and Asian
- ○ White and Black African
- ○ White and Black Caribbean
- ○ Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background

If you selected 'Any other mixed/multiple ethnic background', please describe.

White

- ○ English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British
- ○ Gypsy/Irish Traveller
- ○ Irish
- ○ Any other white background

If you selected 'Any other white background', please describe.

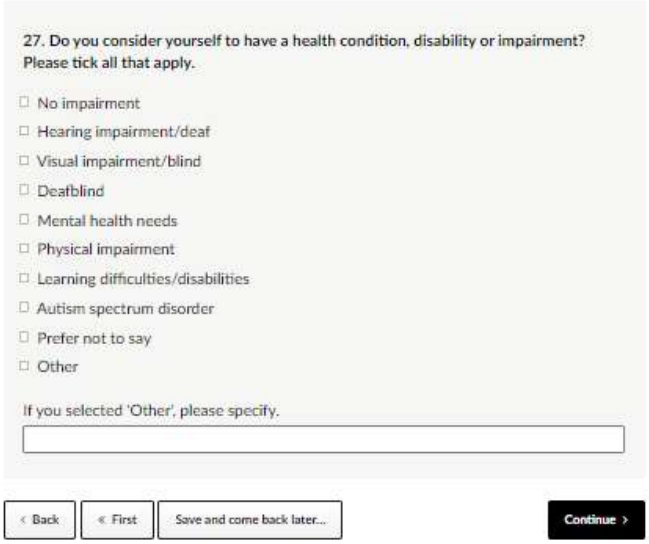
Other ethnic group

- ○ Arab
- ○ Any other ethnic group

If you selected 'Any other ethnic group', please describe.

Prefer not to say

- ○ Prefer not to say



27. Do you consider yourself to have a health condition, disability or impairment? Please tick all that apply.

- ☐ No impairment
- ☐ Hearing impairment/deaf
- ☐ Visual impairment/blind
- ☐ Deafblind
- ☐ Mental health needs
- ☐ Physical impairment
- ☐ Learning difficulties/disabilities
- ☐ Autism spectrum disorder
- ☐ Prefer not to say
- ☐ Other

If you selected 'Other', please specify.

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5.5 Appendix B – Essex Highways Newsletters

Essex County Council

Essex Highways

SAFER GREENER HEALTHIER

Essex Highways latest news

Have your say on new electric vehicle charge point strategy

A consultation is open for a new strategy which sets out what we want the charging network to look like for electric vehicles (EVs) in the future.

The Government is phasing out the sale of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 to accelerate the transition to zero emission vehicles. The Essex Electric Vehicle Charge Point Strategy is an important first step in helping to improve access to EV charging points in the county and sets our a simple vision - the right charger in the right place.

The consultation is open until Sunday 30 July 2023 and you can comment on the draft strategy by completing our short online consultation survey.

5.6 Appendix C – Social media posts