

News story: Government funded electric car chargepoints to be smart by July 2019

- innovative technology to help keep electric car charging costs down
- government renews commitment to home and work chargepoint schemes
- over 60,000 domestic chargepoints supported by the Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme grant to date

All government funded home chargepoints for electric vehicles must use innovative 'smart' technology from July 2019, the government announced today (14 December 2018), fulfilling the commitment in the [Road to Zero Strategy published earlier this year](#).

This means chargepoints must be able to be remotely accessed, and capable of receiving, interpreting and reacting to a signal. Smart charging can also reduce high peaks of electricity demands, minimising the cost of electric vehicles to the electricity system – and keeping costs down for consumers by encouraging off-peak charging.

Alongside this the government has also announced that they have maintained grants to install chargepoints at home and in the workplace at their current level of up to £500, making charging easier for consumers and ensuring that plug-in hybrids and battery electric vehicles can be used to their full potential.

Jesse Norman, Roads Minister, said:

The government wants the UK to be the best place in the world to build and own an electric vehicle, and through leadership and innovation it is paving the way to a zero emission future.

We have already supported the installation of over 100,000 home chargepoints. Now the measures announced today will give more people the opportunity to make the move to electric.

Automotive Minister Richard Harrington said:

Today's measures will make it easier for consumers to move towards electric vehicles, helping us power towards a cleaner, greener future.

Through our modern [Industrial Strategy](#) and [Automotive Sector Deal](#), we are investing to ensure the UK is the leading destination for the innovation and manufacture of electric vehicle batteries and technologies to help all parts of the UK reap the economic benefits

of these innovations.

The Electric Vehicle Homecharge Scheme has supported the delivery of domestic chargepoints to consumers since 2014 and has delivered over 60,000 grants to date.

This summer the government published the Road to Zero strategy, built around a core mission for all new cars and vans to be effectively zero emission by 2040, and to achieve key elements of the modern Industrial Strategy to ensure the UK leads the industries of the future and boosts its competitiveness.

The measures outlined in the Road to Zero Strategy amount to nearly £1.5 billion of investment and represent one of the world's most comprehensive packages of support for zero-emission vehicles.

[News story: THINK! Campaign urges young men to stop their friends drink-driving](#)

Don't let your mates drink and drive – that's the message for young men in this year's Christmas THINK! campaign, which launches today (Friday, 14 December 2018).

Three new films are being released, based on the award-winning #matesmatter campaign, which last year had the biggest shift in over a decade in young people's attitudes towards drink driving.

One of the films sees friends in a pub intervene when a man picks up his car keys after he has been drinking, kicking the keys around the venue before they're taken away by the landlady, who calls for a taxi. Another shows a couple kissing, ignoring everything around them until a man picks up his car keys and goes to leave. The couple break the embrace and the boyfriend kisses the man as the girlfriend takes the keys, and says "Someone's getting the bus home."

[Christmas drink drive video: time to tackle](#)

Road Safety Minister Jesse Norman said:

Drink driving needlessly puts human lives at risk.

Our hard-hitting THINK! campaigns have already shown a positive impact on road users, encouraging safer behaviour so as to reduce the number of people killed and injured.

This festive season, the simple message is that friends need to step in and stop their friends from getting behind the wheel after drinking.

A recent RAC survey showed more than two thirds of people would urge their friend not to drive if they thought they were over the limit. This THINK! campaign provides simple solutions to encourage 18 to 24 year-old men to step in if they see their friend trying to drive home after drinking any alcohol.

The films will be broadcast online and on social media during the Christmas and the party season as well as at football grounds, on [Spotify](#) and in pubs.

RAC road safety spokesperson Pete Williams said:

Drink-driving wrecks lives and we would encourage every driver to consider whether they really want to take the risk of mixing alcohol with being behind the wheel this Christmas.

Regrettably, we have seen the number of people who admit to having driven while over the limit increase by 50% in the past 12 months from 8% to 12% so we welcome this hard-hitting campaign. It delivers a strong message that drink-driving is not acceptable, and also encourages people to speak up if they see their friends doing it.

National Police Chiefs' Council Lead for Roads Policing, Chief Constable Anthony Bangham said:

Driving under the influence of drink or drugs is an incredibly dangerous and selfish decision to take, and it can have devastating consequences on people's lives.

Far too many people still attempt to drive under the influence and we are better prepared to catch them than ever before. We will ensure that they face the full penalty of law.

Our message is the same all year round: do not do it.

The Department for Transport has also today announced the winners of stage 1 of the competition for new mobile breathalysers, in conjunction with the Parliamentary Advisory Council for Transport Safety (PACTS).

These breathalysers will enable police officers to test drivers instantly at the road side, saving police time as well as getting drink drivers off the roads immediately as they won't have time to sober up on their way to police station.

The winners are Lion Laboratories and Intoximeters: companies that produce instruments to test alcohol on the breath. Their designs will now go be

submitted for Home Office testing, with a view to being ready for 2020.

In addition stage 2 of the competition [will now be open for bids from manufacturers who are able to provide devices for police forces for trials.](#)

News story: The Sun Military Awards 2018 reward armed forces heroes

The Sun Military Awards 2018 – known as the Millies – have recognised the true excellence of the UK's armed forces with a star-studded ceremony at London's Banqueting House.

The 11th annual ceremony awarded prizes to winners from the Royal Navy, Army and RAF, recognising remarkable feats of bravery, sacrifice and selflessness.

Six members of 1st The Queen's Dragoon Guards won the Hero Overseas award for their lifesaving first aid response during the Las Vegas shooting last year, where 59 people lost their lives. The young soldiers bravely stepped in and used their battlefield training to aid the emergency services.

England manager Gareth Southgate attended the awards ceremony to present the Inspiring Others award to Major Scott Mills of the Royal Marines, who helped prepare the England men's football team ahead of their historic World Cup campaign this year.

Defence Secretary Gavin Williamson, who hosted the nominees at a reception at 10 Downing Street ahead of the awards show, said:

It was a great honour to attend The Sun Military Awards and congratulate so many of the winners and nominees in person. The incredible stories told tonight show how our armed forces protect British people and our interests at home and abroad.

Whether by rescuing civilians from conflict, helping Salisbury recover from a reckless chemical attack or standing up to the appalling use of chemical weapons in Syria, tonight's nominees have shown the brilliance and bravery of our armed forces. I'm grateful to The Sun for helping the whole country congratulate these remarkable serving personnel and those who support them in their vital work.

Air Chief Marshal Sir Stephen Hillier accepted the Judges' Award for Special Recognition on behalf of the Royal Air Force for RAF100 and its success in celebrating the RAF's centenary year.

The nominees rubbed shoulders with famous faces on the red carpet, including armed forces supporters Nick Knowles, Bear Grylls and Dame Kelly Holmes and sports stars Victoria Pendleton, Amy Williams and Thom Evans. Television stars Georgia Toffolo, Emily Atack and Vicky Pattison also attended to show their support.

The winners of The Sun Military Awards 2018 are:

Hero at Home – Individual

Commander Andrew Parkinson – for rescuing a woman trapped underwater beneath a yacht in a Hampshire marina

Hero at Home – Unit

Joint Chemical, Biological, Radiological and Nuclear Task Force – for their response to the Salisbury attack

Hero Overseas – Individual

Lance Corporal Chris May, Troopers Stuart Finlay, Ross Woodward, James Astbury, Zak Davidson and Dean Priestley – for their medical response to the Las Vegas shooting, the deadliest mass shooting in American history

Hero Overseas – Unit

HMS Daring – for withstanding danger and aggression guarding vital shipping routes around the world

Best Reservist

Corporal Isabell Hutchinson – for sensitively preventing a young woman from taking her own life

Inspiring Others

Major Scott Mills – for his training of the England men's football team ahead of the 2018 World Cup

Overcoming Adversity

Robert Long – for his success in Jiu-Jitsu since being blinded by an IED in Afghanistan

Innovation Award

Defence Science and Technology Laboratory – for its work on a sepsis diagnosis breakthrough

Support to the Armed Forces

There But Not There – for its success in commemorating the First World War and raising money for service charities

Judges' Award for Special Recognition

RAF100 – for its success in celebrating the centenary of the Royal Air Force and inspiring a new generation

Speech: Preventing further conflict in Cameroon and the Lake Chad Basin

Thank you Mr President. I may I also thank Special Representative Fall and Ms Ghelani of OCHA for briefing the Council today and for all that your respective teams are doing in what is a complicated and difficult region as you've both set out.

Today I will address issues that affect the region as a whole, the situation in the Anglophone Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon and the impact of Boko Haram in the Lake Chad Basin. I will not address DRC, Burundi or CAR as we have the opportunity to discuss these issues in other Council meetings.

Mr Special Representative, the United Kingdom welcomes the holistic approach that you have taken both with this report and to promote peace and stability in Central Africa. An approach that covers the political, humanitarian and human rights situation and addresses root causes is crucial to conflict prevention and resolution. We also welcome UNOCA's work to drive forward the Women, Peace and Security agenda, under UNSCR 1325.

We encourage UNOCA to continue to focus on building the capacity of regional organisations to enable delivery of their early warning mechanisms, conflict prevention and peace-building initiatives.

Mr President, I would like to focus now on a country of particular concern in the region and that's Cameroon.

I should start by saying the United Kingdom recognises the many positive contributions Cameroon is making to stability in the region, including their continued commitment to the fight against Boko Haram and the sanctuary that Cameroon offers to refugees from Nigeria and the Central African Republic. However, we are concerned by the reality of the rapidly deteriorating security and humanitarian situation in the Northwest and Southwest regions of Cameroon.

In particular, we are concerned about high levels of displacement and take very seriously Reena Ghelani's warning that this is now one of the fastest growing displacement crises in Africa and reports of human rights violations and abuses perpetrated by armed separatist groups and Government forces, including extra-judicial killings, other killings, abductions, restrictions of movement and access to health and education as described in the Secretary-

General's report. We must always be alert, colleagues, to the risk that the situation escalates, affecting the broader peace and stability of the Central African region, and we have already seen over 30,000 Cameroonians flee into Nigeria. If grievances are not addressed, tensions are likely to increase further.

Mr President, these concerns are not new – I raised them in the Council's discussions in March, as did others. Unfortunately, we have not seen the action needed to address the situation and since March, it has deteriorated further.

We welcome President Biya's recent pledge to address the situation but words alone will not improve things. We strongly urge the Government of Cameroon to take urgent action, including by:

- actively addressing the situation through inclusive dialogue with the Anglophone leadership to address the underlying issues;
- undertaking confidence-building measures in order to diffuse tensions and build conditions for dialogue. This includes the release of political detainees, and implementing the Government's own commitments on decentralisation, and the recommendations of the Commission on Bilingualism;
- allowing full humanitarian access and access to human rights monitors to all parts of the country – and I would also hope and expect that our own SRSG would have access wherever he wanted to go;
- and ensuring accountability for all those responsible for human rights violations and abuses.

And clearly Mr President we also call on the armed groups involved to cease their attacks on civilians, allow full humanitarian access, and access to human rights monitors, and to engage with the Government on these issues.

The UK, for its part, is committed to supporting Cameroon and I am pleased to announce today that the United Kingdom is contributing \$3.1 million to the UN's response in the Anglophone regions – that's equivalent to 20% of this year's flash appeal for the Anglophone crisis – to address immediate humanitarian and medical needs. We strongly encourage other Member States to fund this as an important part of the conflict prevention effort. Preventing a crisis costs significantly less than resolving one.

Mr President, we have raised our concerns quietly so far and directly with the Government and we are committed to working with the Government of Cameroon in every way we can to help resolve this situation. But I fear, unless action is taken and the situation improves, concern over the situation in Cameroon is likely to increase amongst Security Council Members and become a more prominent part of our discussions.

Mr President in addition to Cameroon I would like to raise our ongoing concern about the humanitarian and security situation in the wider Lake Chad Basin, which continues to deteriorate. The United Kingdom has played its part in providing humanitarian support, as well as significant support particularly to assist the Nigerian security forces in the fight against Boko Haram and Islamic State West Africa (ISWA), but this matter needs the ongoing focus and support of the international community.

The deteriorating security situation in northeast Nigeria is of particular concern, and one I note shared by the Secretary-General. ISWA has increased the frequency, range and sophistication of their attacks and has attacked forward operating military bases in North East Nigeria. The execution by ISWA of humanitarian workers such as Saifura Khorsa and Hauwa Liman, who were both abducted while providing antenatal care to communities in desperate need is a telling reminder of the brutality of ISWA's activities.

Let me conclude Mr President by reiterating that we have an opportunity together to prevent further conflict, and the inevitable suffering and insecurity, and I hope we can all act to do so.

Thank you Mr President.

Press release: Homes England proposes new approach to development at Lodge Hill

Homes England has proposed a new approach to the Lodge Hill development on the Hoo Peninsula in Medway, which will avoid direct Special Scientific Interest (SSSI) impacts on the Lodge Hill site.