

# CMA to examine electric vehicle charging sector

Traditional cars are a major source of greenhouse gas emissions and as part of its “green industrial revolution”, the Government has brought forward the ban of new petrol and diesel vehicles to 2030. This makes the switch to electric vehicles more imminent for UK drivers. The Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) is therefore taking a close look at the electric vehicle charging sector, which is crucial to the roll-out of electric vehicles, as part of its commitment on climate change.

This sector is still in the early stages of development but is growing quickly. The UK currently has almost 20,000 chargepoints, up from around 1,500 in 2011 – although more will be needed in the future as this is the only way to power electric vehicles. The CMA is therefore considering how to ensure the sector works well for people now and in the future, which will help to build trust in the service and address any competition issues.

Research shows that “range anxiety” or not being able to recharge while out and about is a key concern for many consumers – so it is essential that drivers can access a chargepoint when they need one. If people can see that the service will work for them, they are more likely to make the switch to electric vehicles, which is crucial to achieving the government’s long-term ambition for a net zero economy by 2050.

The CMA’s work will centre on 2 broad themes:

- how to develop a competitive sector while also attracting private investment to help the sector grow
- how to ensure people using electric vehicle chargepoints have confidence that they can get the best out of the service

The CMA intends to conclude its market study well within the 12-month deadline, so that it can help shape competition and boost consumer confidence in this developing sector.

Andrea Coscelli, Chief Executive of the CMA, said:

Making the switch to electric vehicles is key to helping the UK become greener, which is why it’s so important that everyone has the confidence to get behind the move. Being able to easily stop off at a petrol station is a standard part of a journey and consumers must trust that electric chargepoints will provide a similarly straight-forward service.

By getting involved early as electric vehicles and chargepoints are still developing, the CMA can make sure consumers are treated

fairly now and in the future.

Market studies can make recommendations to government or other bodies, and issue guidance to businesses and consumers as needed, among other options.

Views are welcomed on any of the issues raised in the [Invitation to Comment](#) by 5 January 2021.

All updates on the CMA's work in this area can be found on the [Electric vehicle charging market study case page](#).

1. The scope of this market study is the supply of chargepoints for plug-in hybrid and all-electric 'passenger' electric vehicles, comprising cars and light vans. It will look at charging in a range of different settings including home and off-street parking; on-street parking; workplace; hub and destination; and en-route charging.
2. Transport is the largest emitting sector of the UK economy, accounting for 28% of UK greenhouse gas emissions in 2017, with road traffic accounting for around 20%. Read more: [Electric Vehicles: driving the transition](#) (BEIS Select Committee, October 2018, P7) and [Road Transport and air emissions](#) (ONS, September 2019).
3. [Read more about 'range anxiety'](#) (P12)
4. Read more about how the CMA is supporting the transition to a low carbon economy in its [2020/21 Annual Plan](#) and read more about its [misleading environmental claims work](#). The CMA will publish its consultation of the 2021/22 annual plan on 3 December.
5. Media queries should be directed to: [press@cma.gov.uk](mailto:press@cma.gov.uk) or 020 3738 6460.

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## [UK authorises Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine](#)

News story

Government authorises first COVID-19 vaccine on independent advice of medicines regulator



A Department of Health and Social Care spokesperson said:

“The Government has today accepted the recommendation from the independent [Medicines and Healthcare products Regulatory Agency \(MHRA\)](#) to approve Pfizer-BioNTech’s COVID-19 vaccine for use. This follows months of rigorous clinical trials and a thorough analysis of the data by experts at the MHRA who have concluded that the vaccine has met its strict standards of safety, quality and effectiveness.

“The [Joint Committee on Vaccinations and Immunisations \(JCVI\)](#) will shortly publish its final advice for the priority groups to receive the vaccine, including care home residents, health and care staff, the elderly and the clinically extremely vulnerable.

“The vaccine will be made available across the UK from next week. The NHS has decades of experience in delivering large scale vaccination programmes and will begin putting their extensive preparations into action to provide care and support to all those eligible for vaccination.

“To aid the success of the vaccination programme it is vital everyone continues to play their part and abide by the necessary restrictions in their area so we can further suppress the virus and allow the NHS to do its work without being overwhelmed.

“Further details will be set out shortly.”

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## [Kenya: call for bids for medical insurance and building products](#)

World news story

The British High Commission Nairobi is inviting bids for the provision of

medical insurance and life cover services, scaffolding services and timber products.



On behalf of the Secretary of State for the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office, the British High Commission Nairobi is inviting all reputable and competent service providers with the relevant professional skills, experience, technical resources and financial capability for the tender to provide comprehensive medical insurance and life cover services, scaffolding services and timber products to be delivered to the High Commission.

Full details on the requirements, including instructions for interested bidders and registration are available via the FCDO's e-Procurement portal, which requires registration.

Competent and financially stable suppliers are invited to access the invitation to tender documents by following these steps:

1. Open website [Bravo solutions](#) and sign in
2. Navigate to Medical insurance and Life cover Services-CPG/3789/2020. ITT 4075. Project 4863
3. Navigate to Scaffolding Services – Nairobi CPG/3795/2020. ITT 4077. Project 4924
4. Navigate to Timber products – CPG/3796/2020. ITT 4076. Project 4925

## **Deadlines**

Please take note of the deadlines for submitting bids for:

- scaffolding services and timber products – Friday, 18 December 2020
- medical insurance and life cover services – Friday, 8 January 2021

Kindly note that responses should be in English. Contact the Regional Procurement Lead, Mr Tankiso Potiane at [Tankiso.Potiane@fcdo.gov.uk](mailto:Tankiso.Potiane@fcdo.gov.uk) for any queries.

## **Disclaimer**

The British High Commission Nairobi reserves the right not to select any service provider and will only reply to the best-suited organisation. The

British High Commission Nairobi will not meet any expenses incurred in preparing your invitation to tender documents.

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## [Festive travel tips for people considering overseas travel](#)

People considering going abroad over the festive period should do their research before booking a trip, the Foreign, Commonwealth & Development Office (FCDO) has advised.

As the travel and wider restrictions that were in place between 5 November and 2 December throughout England are replaced by regional tiers, the FCDO is urging people to inform themselves of their local rules and the possible disruption they may face if they choose to go overseas. Those resident in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland should consult the regulations that apply to them.

The FCDO has issued five festive travel tips that people should read before deciding to go abroad:

1. Check the travel restrictions that apply to you. If you live in the UK, there are different restrictions in place in [England](#), [Scotland](#), [Wales](#) and [Northern Ireland](#).
2. Read the [FCDO's foreign travel checklist](#), which includes information on preparing for an overseas trip.
3. Check the [travel advice for the destination you are planning to go to](#). These pages include information on entry, screening and quarantine requirements that could affect your journey.
4. Sign up for [travel advice email alerts](#), so you automatically receive the latest travel advice updates for the destinations you want to know about.
5. Get a [travel insurance](#) policy and make sure you are happy with the level of cover it provides.

**Nigel Adams, Minister responsible for FCDO Travel Advice, said:**

Coronavirus has fundamentally changed the way we travel, meaning it's more important than ever to consider the need for a trip abroad and to be prepared. Our staff will do all they can to help British people in difficulty, but travellers must take responsibility as well.

Different destinations may introduce new rules and restrictions with little notice as they respond to the pandemic, so it's vital that people plan their travel and understand that disruption is possible.

In England from 2 December, people are permitted to travel abroad, subject to any restrictions in place at their destination. However, those in Tier 3 should avoid leaving the area other than for reasons such as work, education or caring responsibilities.

Inbound international travel will continue to be governed by the travel corridor approach. Individuals will need to self-isolate for 14 days if arriving from or having travelled through a non-travel corridor country or territory. All arrivals will need to abide by the regional restrictions in place when in the UK.

From 15 December 2020, passengers arriving into England from countries not featured on the government's travel corridor list will have the option to take a private Covid test after 5 days of self-isolation, with a negative result releasing them from the need to isolate.

Passengers will be able to book a test from a provider on a GOV.UK list before arriving in England. If they choose to book a test, they will need to state this on their passenger locator form prior to arriving and then go straight into self-isolation at home as usual. If they choose to opt in after arrival, they will need to resubmit their passenger locator form.

The FCDO continues to advise against cruise ship travel at this time. This is due to the ongoing pandemic and is based on the latest medical advice. This advice is kept under constant review.

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## [Home sought for UK's ground-breaking prototype fusion power plant](#)

- UK government has called on local communities across the country to put

- forward proposals to host the UK's prototype fusion energy power plant
- when complete, the plant will pave the way to a limitless supply of low carbon, clean energy to the UK
- follows Prime Minister's [ten-point-plan for a green industrial revolution](#) and the UK's ambition to be the first country in the world to commercialise fusion energy technology

Local communities across the UK are being asked to step forward with proposals to house a prototype fusion power plant in a move that could propel them on to the global stage in a world first. The successful bidder could be first in line for thousands of new local highly-skilled jobs, putting them at the heart of the government's green industrial revolution.

Fusion offers a virtually limitless source of clean electricity by copying the processes that power the sun.

The UK government has today (Wednesday 2 December) invited UK regions and communities to put forward proposals to become the home of STEP – the Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production – the UK's ambitious programme to design and build a prototype fusion plant.

Communities will have until the end of March 2021 to submit their nominations and will need to demonstrate that their local area has just the right mix of social, commercial and technical conditions to host the new plant – such as adequate land conditions, grid connection and water supply.

The successful site will be home to the construction of the plant, targeted for completion by 2040, and will become a global hub for fusion energy and associated industries. This could create thousands of local highly skilled jobs during the construction and operation of the plant, as well as for the local supply chain, while attracting a new science and technology hub for the UK.

This follows the Prime Minister's 10 point plan for a green industrial revolution set out earlier this month which committed to doubling down on the UK's ambition to be the first country in the world to commercialise fusion energy technology, with £222 million allocated to begin the STEP design work.

Business and Energy Secretary Alok Sharma said:

We want the UK to be a trailblazer in developing fusion energy by capitalising on its incredible potential as a limitless clean energy source that could last for generations to come.

Communities across the country have an incredible opportunity to secure their place in the history books as the home of STEP, helping the UK to be the first country in the world to commercialise fusion and creating thousands of highly skilled jobs to drive our green industrial revolution.



STEP will be delivered through the UK Atomic Energy Authority which carries out fusion energy research on behalf of the government.

In addition to its £222 million commitment to STEP, the government has also invested £184 million by 2025 in new fusion facilities, infrastructure and apprenticeships at the Culham Science Centre in Oxfordshire, providing further support to this important centre of fusion and innovation.

UK Atomic Energy Authority CEO Professor Ian Chapman said:

STEP is about moving from research and development to delivery.

It will prove that fusion is not a far-off dream, but a dawning reality with the UK leading the commercial development of fusion power and positioning itself as a pioneer in sustainable fusion energy.

To achieve this ambitious goal will require all the ingenuity and application of the UK's science and engineering industry and we look forward to working with industrial partners in the years ahead, not just to invest, but also to support the technical evolution of the programme.

We are confident that working together with partners in the UK and around the world will enable the UK to bring a revolutionary technology to market.

A recent independent study by London Economics found that the UK economy has gained £1.4 billion from the government's direct investment in fusion energy over the past decade.

## **UK Atomic Energy Authority**

The UK Atomic Energy Authority (UKAEA) carries out fusion energy research on behalf of the UK government at Culham Science Centre near Oxford. UKAEA oversees Britain's fusion programme, headed by the MAST Upgrade (Mega Amp Spherical Tokamak) experiment. It also hosts the world's largest fusion research facility, JET (Joint European Torus), which it operates for European scientists under a contract with the European Commission.

Fusion research at Culham is funded by the [Engineering & Physical Sciences Research Council](#) (EPSRC) and by the European Union under the EURATOM treaty.

More information is available on the [UKAEA website](#) and the [UKAEA Twitter account @UKAEAofficial](#).

## **What is fusion energy?**

Fusion research aims to copy the process which powers the sun for a new large-scale source of clean energy here on earth. When light atomic nuclei fuse together to form heavier ones, a large amount of energy is released. To



do this, fuel is heated to extreme temperatures, 10 times hotter than the centre of the sun, forming a plasma in which fusion reactions take place. A commercial power station will use the energy produced by fusion reactions to generate electricity.

Fusion has a huge potential to be a long-term energy source that is environmentally responsible (with no carbon emissions). It is inherently safe with abundant and widespread fuel resources (the raw materials are found in seawater and the earth's crust).

## **What is STEP?**

STEP (Spherical Tokamak for Energy Production) is an ambitious programme to design and construct a fusion energy prototype plant, targeting 2040 for completion. It is a UKAEA programme with an initial £222 million funding from the UK government to produce a concept design by 2024. The STEP prototype will be used to research and develop the technology and enable a fleet of commercial plants to follow in the years after 2040. The aim for this first phase of work is to produce a 'concept design' by 2024. This means an outline of the power plant, with a clear view on how we will design each of the major systems. The next phase of work will include detailed engineering design, while all relevant permissions and consents to build the prototype are sought. The final phase is construction, with operations targeted to begin around 2040. The aim is to have a fully evolved design and approval to build by 2032, enabling construction to begin.

Nominations for the STEP siting will likely be coordinated by local authorities with input from a range of partners including landowners, Local Enterprise Partnerships, local businesses and others.

Communities have until the end of March 2021 to submit their initial nominations and assessment of sites will be based on a set of social, commercial and technical criteria, taking around 2 years to complete. On conclusion of this assessment UKAEA will make a recommendation to the Secretary of State for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy with the successful site announced around the end of 2022.