EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Cheshire East Council Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy

VERSION CONTROL

Date	Version	Author	Description of Changes
10.06.2021	**1**	John Davies	**N/A**
08.08.2021	**1**	John Davies	**Amendments following comments**
17.04.2023	**1**	Lucia Southworth / John Davies	**Amendments following consultation**

CHESHIRE EAST COUNCIL - EQUALITY IMPACT ASSESSMENT

Stage 1 Description: Fact finding (about your policy / service /

Department	*Strategic Transport*		**Lead officer responsible for assessment**		*John Davies*	
Service	*Strategic Infrastructure*		**Other members of team undertaking assessment**		*N/A*	
Date	**17.04.2023**		**Version 3**			
Type of document (mark as appropriate)	**Strategy**	**~~Plan~~**	**Function**	**Policy**	**Procedure**	**Service**
Is this a new/ existing/ revision of an existing document (please mark as appropriate)	**~~New~~**		**~~Existing~~**		**Revision**	
Title and subject of the impact assessment (include a brief description of the aims, outcomes, operational issues as appropriate and how it fits in with the wider aims of the organisation) **Please attach a copy of the strategy/ plan/ function/ policy/ procedure/ service**	**Cheshire East Council Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy** **Background** Cheshire East Council is committed to reducing carbon emissions and improving air quality as outlined in the Cheshire East Borough Council Air Quality Action Plan (AQAP) (2018). CEC noted that Parliament had declared a climate emergency in May 2019 and as a result Cheshire East committed to being carbon neutral by 2025 and work to encourage all businesses, residents, and organisations in Cheshire East to reduce their carbon footprint. This EV Charging Infrastructure Strategy has been developed to directly support CEC's aim of reducing carbon emissions by accelerating the transition to electric vehicles, and supports the ambitions outlined within the Cheshire East Local Transport Plan 4 Strategy. Cheshire East Council is seeking to develop a strategic response to the emergence of electric vehicles (EV) and seeks to identify, scope and address infrastructure needs, and issues related to EVs. This includes conducting a technology and policy review, establishing an EV evidence base, identifying EV infrastructure requirements, and producing a summary report of the above and set out an action plan. A stakeholder workshop was carried out where the following objectives were agreed for this strategy: • Reducing inequalities in chargepoint provision to enable all of our communities to transition to electric vehicles in a timely way: • To contribute towards reduced carbon emissions and improved air quality from transport: • To support the uptake of electric vehicles by individuals, businesses, and organisations within Cheshire East:					

	• To help ensure infrastructure makes a positive contribution to the streetscape through sensitive placement and appearance, avoiding any negative impacts on other highway users, particularly pedestrians. • To guide the provision of infrastructure that is safe, easy to use and represents good value for money both on installation and throughout its life; • Supporting electric vehicles in the context of a wider transport system that encourages mileage reduction, active travel, and public transport: and. • Cheshire East Council to lead the way in transitioning fleet vehicles to EV and supporting organisations across the wider borough. These objectives have guided the development of the strategy and will continue to guide implementation of the key measures set out within it.
Who are the main stakeholders, and have they been engaged with? (e.g., general public, employees, Councillors, partners, specific audiences, residents)	Government policy to end of sales of new petrol and diesel cars by 2030 (2020) involves Step 1 which will see the phase-out date for the sale of new petrol and diesel cars and vans brought forward to 2030. Step 2 will see all new cars and vans be fully zero emission at the tailpipe from 2035 (ending the sale of Plug-in Hybrid electric vehicles).

As this policy becomes a reality the number of EVs across the borough will increase. The graph below shows the percentage of battery electric vehicles as a percentage across the borough by 2030.

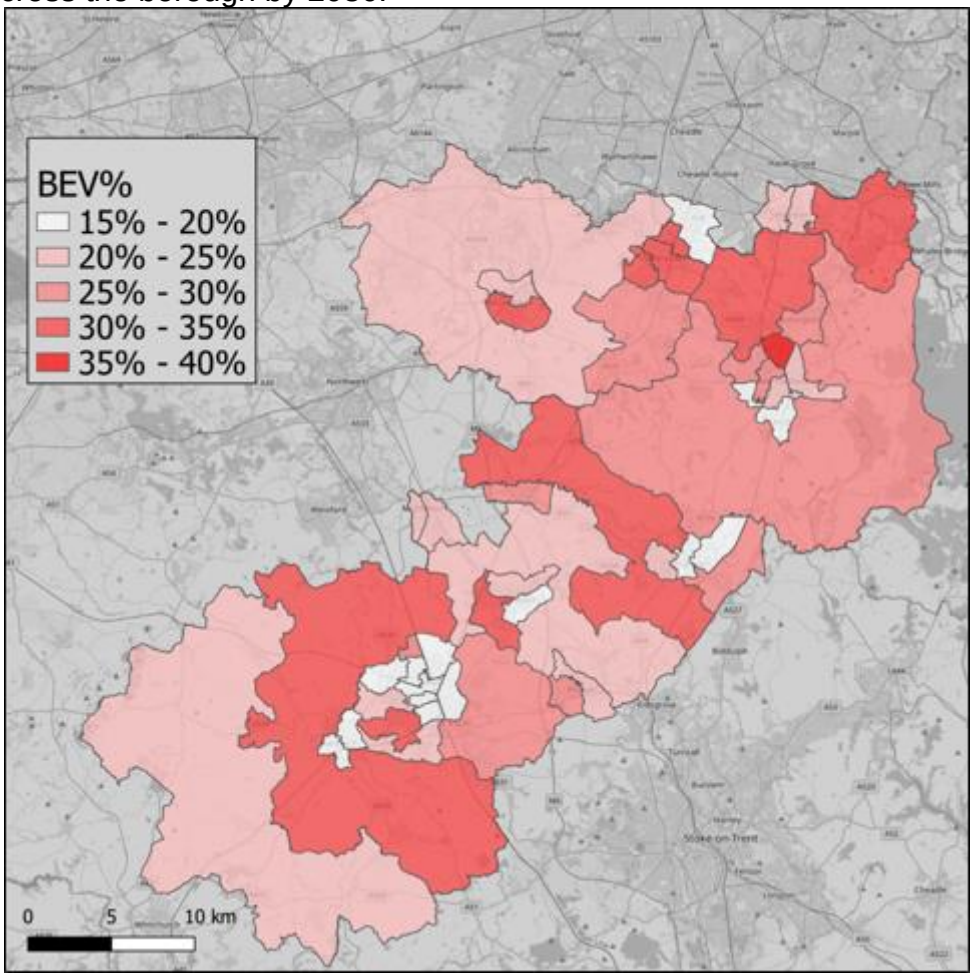


Figure 1 – Forecasted uptake of Battery Electric Vehicles across CEC by 2030

- The public (including residents and visitors to the Borough)
- Cheshire East Council stakeholders
- Public transport operators
- Local businesses/organisations
- Schools and education establishments
- Neighbouring local authorities
- Governmental bodies (e.g., Local Enterprise Partnership)
- Statutory transport bodies (e.g., Department for Transport and Transport for the North)
- Partner organisations
- Town and Parish Councils
- Umbrella organisations for people with specialist transport needs
- Transport interest groups

	• Environmental groups • MPs • Emergency services
What consultation method(s) did you use?	During November-December 2022/3 Cheshire East Council undertook a consultation on its Draft Electric Vehicle (EV) Infrastructure Strategy. The consultation was held online with paper versions being available on request, hard copies of the consultation were also provided at libraries in Cheshire East. It was promoted to: • The public • Town and Parish Councils • Business' in Cheshire East • Local transport operators • Special interest and community groups In total, 408 responses were received, 404 via the online survey and 4 email responses. A breakdown of demographics can be viewed in Appendix 1. There was a good distribution of responses received from across the borough, a map of respondent postcodes (298 Cheshire East Postcodes that could be mapped) can be viewed in Appendix 2.

Stage 2 Initial Screening

Who is affected and what evidence have you considered to arrive at this analysis? (This may or may not include the stakeholders listed above)	All motorists and highway users are likely to be affected by the Government's plans to phase out the sale of petrol and diesel vehicles by 2030. This infrastructure strategy is intended to address issues with gaps in the charging infrastructure network. In turn this is anticipated to support communities in Cheshire East and neighbouring areas to transition to EVs. There is potential for some negative impacts on specific groups from inappropriate charging infrastructure. For example, cables trailing across the pavement could cause obstacles for pedestrians and people with specific mobility needs. This could affect older people, disabled people, and parents / carers with prams and pushchairs. The strategy notes these risks and consequently includes a chapter on the Council's framework regarding residential charging. The residential charging framework provides an explanation of the background research, accessibility considerations and potential options considered before presenting the councils framework. This should help residents to understand why the framework has been chosen and why it is important for protecting accessibility for all.

	Should the installation of charging infrastructure be left purely to the commercial sector there is potential for gaps in areas of lower incomes, given there is a link between affluence and purchasing / leasing EVs. The strategy seeks to strike a balance between enabling charging infrastructure to come forward in sufficient levels for areas of higher demand whilst also seeking to address market failures by proportionately supporting the provision of charging infrastructure in areas of lower demand in the short to medium term. This would create a balanced network giving broad coverage across the borough to support the transition to EVs in a timely way. The consultation survey highlighted various concerns amongst a portion of the respondents which stem from misinformation. To help relieve concern and provide residents with correct information, myth busting web content will be published alongside the refreshed strategy.
Who is intended to benefit and how?	This strategy will help to increase the availability of charge points across the borough for communities. Thus, it will help increase the uptake of these vehicles and contribute to improved air quality and decarbonisation. Improved air quality will particularly improve the lives of people who suffer from breathing difficulties associated with high levels of pollutants in the air.
Could there be a different impact or outcome for some groups?	In addition to the risk identified above regarding cables trailing across pavements there is potential for an unbalanced charging network that has key gaps in certain areas. This would result in limiting the ability of some communities to transition to EV and in the long term limit their ability to operate a vehicle in extreme cases. The strategy seeks to overcome these issues. There is currently a large price differential between charging using a domestic power supply and using publicly provided chargepoints. This has the potential to penalise residents with lower socioeconomic status. This may make them reliant on domestic charging or, where they do not have access to domestic charging, reliant on more expensive public chargepoints.
Does it include making decisions based on individual characteristics, needs or circumstances?	A key element of the research underpinning the strategy is information on the propensity of different segments of the population to purchase / lease an electric vehicle in the short term. This points to more affluent people transitioning to EVs in these timescales due to the high price of vehicles. As a result, this data has been considered (alongside a range of other variables) to understand where demand for charging infrastructure may be strongest. However, the strategy also has a firm focus on providing a balanced network that services the whole borough and its population. One of the key measures recommended by the strategy is the provision of community charging hubs, in areas with less access to off-street parking, which are often more deprived areas. Charging hubs in off-street locations for residential use can also perform better than on-street chargers in terms of addressing potential streetscape concerns and footpath obstructions in residential streets. Feedback from stakeholders has been sought on what shape a balanced network would take and how this can be provided.

	Addressing the price differential of petrol/diesel vs EVs is out of the scope of this strategy that is focussed on charging infrastructure. Central government offer grants for the purchase of EVs however this still leaves a price differential at present. There is an industry consensus that price parity between petrol/diesel vs EVs will be reached in the period 2025 – 2030. In the meantime, the financial implications of the Council seeking to address the price differential would likely be very significant.
Are relations between different groups or communities likely to be affected? (e.g., will it favour one particular group or deny opportunities for others?)	As noted above the uptake of EVs at present correlates with income levels, however this situation is anticipated to change in the coming years. Whilst this strategy highlights the available purchasing assistance as it is an infrastructure strategy it does not make recommendations to CEC for addressing price parity.
Is there any specific targeted action to promote equality? Is there a history of unequal outcomes (do you have enough evidence to prove otherwise)?	At present there are key gaps in the charging network within Cheshire East. The strategy aims to address these gaps in provision in a timely way to enable the transition to EVs. One of the objectives of the strategy set out earlier is "to seek to overcome inequalities in infrastructure provision, enabling our communities to transition to electric vehicles in a timely way, ensured that the strategy sought to promote equality". This was done through the consideration and recommendation of key measures which aim to provide charging infrastructure which provides a balanced network across the borough giving broad coverage. As noted above another key objective of the strategy is to help ensure infrastructure makes a positive contribution to the streetscape through sensitive placement and appearance, avoiding any negative impacts on other road users, particularly pedestrians. Ensuring infrastructure does not impact on the useability of footways will avoid negative impacts on disabled people using mobility aids and people pushing prams etc. There will be close liaison with responsible chargepoint operators to ensure that any potential negative impacts on protected groups can be eliminated or mitigated where possible.

Is there an actual or potential negative impact on these specific characteristics? (Please tick)

Age	**Y**		**Marriage & civil partnership**		**N**	**Religion & belief**		**N**
Disability	**Y**		**Pregnancy & maternity**	**Y**		**Gender**		**N**
Gender reassignment		**N**	**Race**	**Y**		**Sexual orientation**		**N**

What evidence do you have to support your findings? (Quantitative and qualitative) Please provide additional information that you wish to include as appendices to this document, i.e., graphs, tables, charts	**Consultation/ involvement carried out**	
		No
Age	• There is potential for negative impact arising from difficulties, especially for older people, around plugging in cables regarding dexterity and strength.	

	• There is potential for negative impact resulting from on-street electric vehicle charge points as trailing cables can pose a trip hazard (relevant to all age groups). • Advances in technology can be less accessible for some and it is identified that related difficulties in activities such as setting up user accounts, using charging points themselves, have the potential to result in negative impacts.		
Disability	• There are potential benefits for those with conditions that affect breathing as air quality is improved with switch from ICE (Internal combustion engine) to BEV (Battery electric vehicle). • Increased electric vehicles will mean less noise pollution making things more ambiently pleasant but problematic for those who use sound for safety. • There is potential for negative impact resulting from on-street electric vehicle charge points as trailing cables can pose a trip hazard and/or a barrier to many disabled people (this includes for people with a wide range of disabilities such as people with physical impairments, people who are blind/have low vision, people who may have a carer with them). • Areas where there are restricted widths and uneven road surfaces can contribute to exacerbating issues experienced by people with a wide range of impairment types by increasing barriers to accessibility. • As well as the potential for trip hazards and for reducing space resulting in barriers to many disabled people, it has been identified that there is potential for negative impact regarding safety for wheelchair and mobility scooter users as, even with installation of such features as cable protectors, surfaces will be uneven, potentially resulting in unsafe practices such as manoeuvring around these potential obstacles into traffic flow areas. • Advances in technology can be less accessible for some and it is identified that related difficulties in activities such as setting up user accounts, using charging points themselves have the potential to result in negative impacts, for example, for people with learning disabilities. • There is potential for negative impacts arising from difficulties, especially for people with a range of disabilities (e.g., upper mobility, dexterity etc.) around plugging in cables.		
Gender reassignment	At this stage, impacts in respect of this Protected Characteristic are identified as being 'neutral' as none have been identified which have the potential to disproportionately affect people within this 'group'.		
Marriage & civil partnership	At this stage, impacts in respect of this Protected Characteristic are identified as being 'neutral' as none have been identified which have the potential to disproportionately affect people within this 'group'.		
Pregnancy & maternity	• There is potential for negative impact resulting from on-street electric vehicle charge points as trailing cables can pose a trip hazard and/or a barrier to people with a pram/pushchair. Areas where there are restricted widths and uneven road surfaces can contribute to exacerbating issues experienced by people with a pram/pushchair. • In addition, it has been identified that there is potential for negative impact regarding safety for people with pram/pushchair as, even with installation of such features as cable protectors, surfaces will be uneven, potentially resulting in unsafe practices such as manoeuvring around these potential obstacles into traffic flow areas. These issues also		

	relate to those who are pregnant and who may experience less mobility because of pregnancy.		
Race	• There is potential for exclusion of people in different portions of this group. This could result from language barriers at charging infrastructure.		
Religion & belief	At this stage, impacts in respect of this Protected Characteristic are identified as being 'neutral' as none have been identified which have the potential to disproportionately affect people within this 'group'.		
Gender	At this stage, impacts in respect of this Protected Characteristic are identified as being 'neutral' as none have been identified which have the potential to disproportionately affect people within this 'group'.		
Sexual orientation	At this stage, impacts in respect of this Protected Characteristic are identified as being 'neutral' as none have been identified which have the potential to disproportionately affect people within this 'group'.		
Proceed to full impact assessment? (Please tick)	**Yes**		**Date: 17/4/23**
Lead officers sign off	John Davies	**Date**	17/4/23
Head of service sign off	Richard Hibbert	**Date**	24/5/23

If yes, please proceed to Stage 3. If no, please publish the initial screening as part of the suite of documents relating to this issue

Stage 3 Identifying impacts and evidence

This section identifies if there are impacts on equality, diversity and cohesion, what evidence there is to support the conclusion and what further action is needed

Protected characteristics	**Is the policy (function etc….) likely to have an adverse impact on any of the groups?** **Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations** *List what negative impacts were recorded in Stage 1 (Initial Assessment).*	**Are there any positive impacts of the policy (function etc….) on any of the groups?** **Please include evidence (qualitative & quantitative) and consultations** *List what positive impacts were recorded in **Stage 1** (Initial Assessment).*	**Please rate the impact taking into account any measures already in place to reduce the impacts identified** ***High:*** *Significant potential impact; history of complaints; no mitigating measures in place; need for consultation* ***Medium:*** *Some potential impact; some mitigating measures in place, lack of evidence to show effectiveness of measures* ***Low:*** *Little/no identified impacts; heavily legislation-led; limited public facing aspect*	**Further action (Only an outline needs to be included here. A full action plan can be included at Section 4)** *Once you have assessed the impact of a policy/service, it is important to identify options and alternatives to reduce or eliminate any negative impact. Options considered could be adapting the policy or service, changing the way in which it is implemented or introducing balancing measures to reduce any negative impact. When considering each option, you should think about how it will reduce any negative impact, how it might impact on other groups and how it might impact on relationships between groups and overall issues around community cohesion. You should clearly demonstrate how you have considered various options and the impact of these. You must have a detailed rationale behind decisions and a justification for those alternatives that have not been accepted.*
Age	• There is a concern that increased pavement clutter could result in barriers for some older people.	The strategy aims to provide high quality infrastructure that does not pose problems to people with mobility impairments.	Low	Engage with older people umbrella groups as part of consultation to understand their needs and concerns. Ensure the design of infrastructure does not negatively affect these groups.
Disability	• There is a concern that increased pavement clutter could increase barriers for some	The strategy aims to provide high quality infrastructure that does not pose problems to	Low	Engage with disability umbrella groups as part of consultation to understand their needs and concerns. Ensure the design of

	wheelchair users. • There is a concern that increased pavement clutter could pose a disproportionate risk to those suffering a visual impairment.	people with disabilities.		infrastructure does not negatively affect these groups.
Gender reassignment				
Marriage & civil partnership				
Pregnancy and maternity	• There is a concern that increased pavement clutter could increase barrier for prams and pushchairs.	The strategy aims to provide high quality infrastructure that does not pose problems to people pushing prams and pushchairs.	Low	Engage with umbrella groups as part of consultation to understand their needs and concerns. Ensure the design of infrastructure does not negatively affect these groups.
Race				
Religion & belief				
Gender				
Sexual orientation				
Is this change due to be carried out wholly or partly by other providers? If yes, please indicate how you have ensured that the partner organisation complies with equality legislation (e.g., tendering, awards process, contract, monitoring and performance measures)				

Stage 4 Review and Conclusion

Summary: provide a brief overview including impact, changes, improvement, any gaps in evidence and additional data that is needed

N/A

Specific actions to be taken to reduce, justify or remove any adverse impacts	How will this be monitored?	Officer responsible	Target date
All installations must adhere to the Planning and Transportation design guidance documents and consider The Disability Discrimination Act (2005).	Project Board and risk register	Stephen Morris / John Davies	Ongoing
Engage with key groups as part of a public consultation.	Project Board and risk register	Stephen Morris / John Davies	Ongoing
Please provide details and link to full action plan for actions			
When will this assessment be reviewed?	Pre-consultation		
Are there any additional assessments that need to be undertaken in relation to this assessment?	Not at this point		
Lead officers sign off	John Davies	**Date**	17/04/21
Head of service sign off	Richard Hibbert	**Date**	24/05/23

Please publish this completed EIA form on the relevant section of the Cheshire East website

Appendix 1 – Demographic breakdowns

A set of demographic questions were asked at the end of the survey to ensure there was a wide range of views from across different characteristics. All the questions were optional and therefore won't add up to the total number of responses received.

Table 3.1: Number of survey respondents by representation

Category	Count	Percent
As a Cheshire East resident	363	90%
Cheshire East staff member / employee	20	5%
On behalf of a local business	16	< 5%
As an elected Cheshire East Ward Councillor, or Town/Parish Councillor / Clerk	6	< 5%
On behalf of a group, organisation or club	2	< 5%
As a Cheshire East resident on behalf of someone else	<5	< 5%
Other	17	< 5%
Grand Total	**402**	**100%**

Table 3.2: Number of survey respondents by gender

Category	Count	Percent
Male	165	67%
Female	63	26%
Prefer not to say	17	7%
Grand Total	**245**	**100%**

Table 3.3: Number of survey respondents by age group

Category	Count	Percent
16-24	< 5	< 5%
25-34	32	8%
35-44	76	20%
45-54	99	26%
55-64	88	23%
65-74	47	12%
75-84	13	3%
85 and over	22	6%
Prefer not to say	< 5	< 5%
Grand Total	**381**	**100%**

Table 3.4: Number of survey respondents by ethnic origin

Category	Count	Percent
White British / English / Welsh / Scottish / Northern Irish / Irish	137	96%
Any other White background	< 5	< 5%
Asian / Asian British	6	< 5%
Mixed: White and Black Caribbean / African / Asian	< 5	< 5%
Prefer not to say	< 5	< 5%
Grand Total	**371**	**100%**

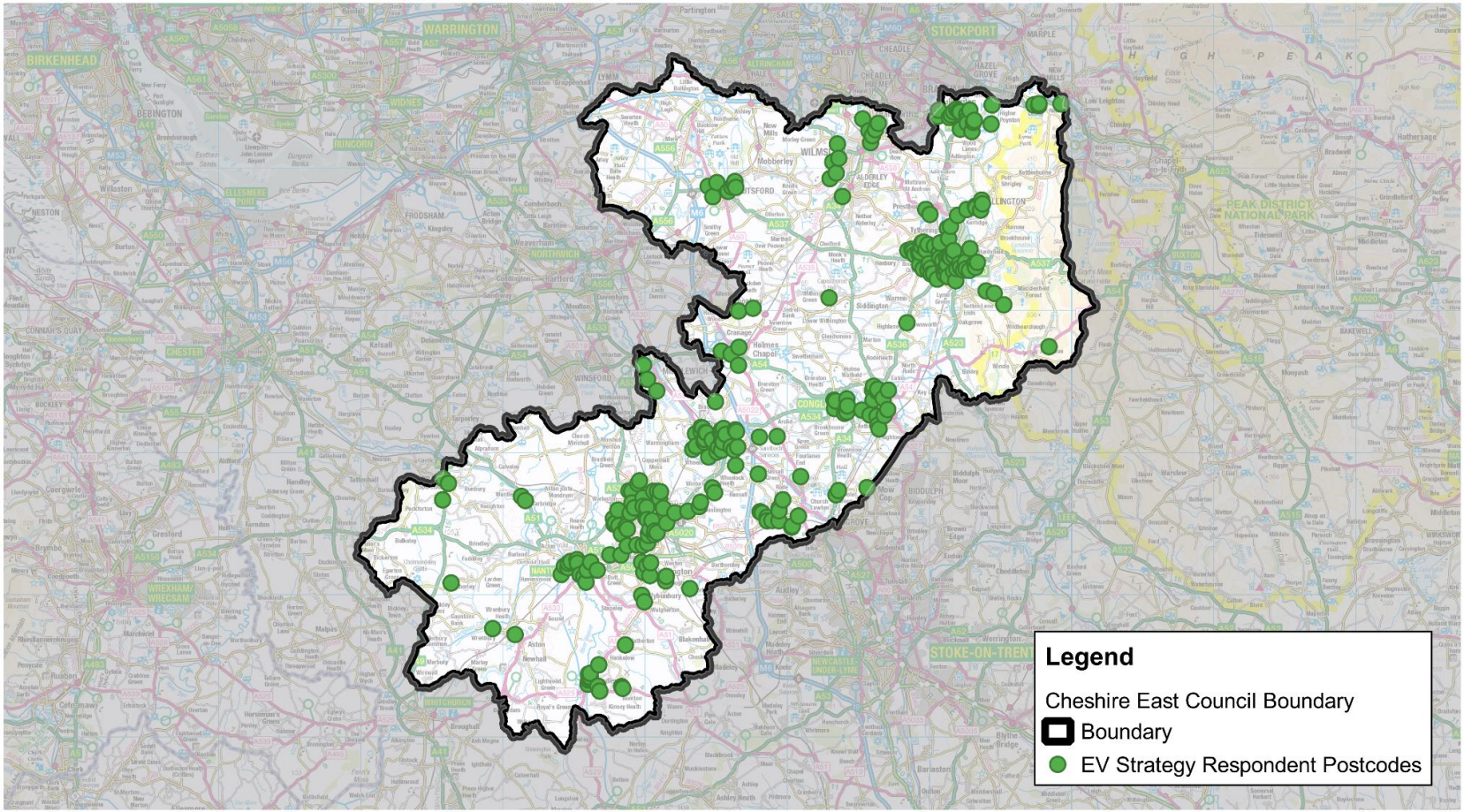
Table 3.5: Number of survey respondents by religious belief

Category	Count	Percent
Christian	134	37%
Muslim	9	< 5%
Other religious belief	6	<5%
None	156	43%
Prefer not to say	57	16%
Grand Total	**326**	**100%**

Table 3.6: Number of survey respondents by limited activity due to health problem / disability

Category	Count	Percent
Yes	299	79%
No	49	13%
Prefer not to say	31	8%
Grand Total	**379**	**100%**

Appendix 2 – Map of respondent postcodes



Electric Vehicle Infrastrcture Strategy
Respondent Postcodes

1:360,744

OFFICIAL