

Sheepscombe Climate & Nature Emergency Update:

Climate Action On Four Wheels

If you are a low mileage driver, keeping your current car is probably better for the planet because of the carbon emissions involved in making any new car. If not, and if you have off-road parking, then it's worth considering an EV for your next car. That's not just based on being climate friendly, now it's based on cost too. That's partly because petrol cars are inefficient: as Professor Khan says in the People's Emergency Briefing film, "a typical petrol car only uses about 25% of the energy in its fuel to actually move its wheels, most is lost as heat".

Most EV drivers will tell you that EVs are quieter, more relaxing and just better to drive. If acceleration is important to you, they perform better too. You can also pre-cool or pre-heat your car before you get in it from your EV's app. All that, and no air pollution.

You will need a charger (Octopus Energy fit them for £1,000-£1,200) and, to minimise running costs, an electricity tariff such as Octopus Go. Failing that, you could ask a neighbour with a charger to share it using the <https://co-charger.com/> app.

New Electric Vehicles (EVs)

EVs accounted for 30% of new car sales in June. Ranges of 300 miles on a single charge are quite common now. Some offer 500 miles. This has reduced 'range anxiety', as has the availability of public chargers, which have quadrupled since 2021.

In 2021, EVs were typically £8,000-£10,000 more expensive than their petrol equivalent, but since then prices have fallen dramatically. They're now more comparable, and lower if they qualify for a government grant of up to £3,750. If you're after a basic car mostly for local use, Dacia have just reduced the price of their Spring EV to £11,990, making it the cheapest car of any fuel type on the market (range 139 miles). If you buy it through Octopus for £199 per month on a 4-year lease, you get a free charger, servicing and repairs.

EVs are much cheaper to run. Mine currently costs 2.5p per mile in electricity. This compares with 13p-20p per petrol car mile. Disappointingly, the government announced a 3p per mile tax on EVs starting in 2028 to offset the lower tax revenues from fuel duty on petrol sales, but petrol car running costs will still be 3-4 times more.

We will soon be able to take power from batteries in EVs to use in the house, charge home batteries or export to the grid. This is known as 'vehicle to grid (V2G)'. Home batteries may become less popular when this technology becomes commonplace, particularly if your car sits on your drive most of the time.

Plug-in hybrids (with a petrol engine and a battery) are targeted at drivers unwilling or unable to go full EV. This can keep running costs and climate impact low if the car is mostly used for short journeys and the battery is routinely recharged after use.

If you want to learn more about new EVs on YouTube I suggest 'The Everything Electric Show': https://youtube.com/@fullychargedshow?si=yKMLsQw_Hc8lbDaH

Used EVs

Used EVs are currently very good value, mainly because former company leased EVs have flooded the second-hand market. According to Carwow, you can buy a 2021 Renault Zoe for about £8,500 or a 2021 Tesla Model 3 for £17,000.

Octopus Energy

I've mentioned Octopus Energy several times. I'm not on commission (!) but I am a big fan of what they are doing for their customers and the planet. They have a YouTube channel at <https://youtube.com/@octopusenergy?si=eUc-rSmybMkHOM-W>. Other suppliers offer similar tariffs.

Many of the facts and figures above are based on simple Google searches. I haven't tried to verify them all.

Rob Jones, August 2026