

Report to Partnership Board Meeting 10th November 2023

EUROPEAN PROJECTS

FASTER Project Update

PURPOSE OF REPORT

To update Members on the development of the FASTER project funded through the INTERREG VA Programme, supported by the European Regional Development Fund (ERDF). The project launched in October 2020.

OVERVIEW

The FASTER Project (Facilitating A Sustainable Transition to EVs in the Regions) is a joint proposal between seven Partners across Scotland, Ireland and Northern Ireland to support the overarching ambition to transition to low carbon transport systems.

The key objective of FASTER is to install 73 interoperable rapid charge points (50KW capacity) in the INTERREG VA region by June 2023, ensuring that the availability of charging stations is not a major obstacle to EV market penetration. It will also provide an additional supportive, enabling environment for suppliers and consumers, providing increased confidence and reassurance in regional commitment to the emerging EV market.

HITRANS will lead the technical work package on procurement, and will install 24 rapid charge points (or more if budget allows) across the three local authority areas covered within the programme area: Argyll & Bute (excluding Helensburgh), Western Isles, and Skye, Lochalsh & Lochaber areas of The Highland Council.

UPDATE

FASTER installations are progressing rapidly on site as the project nears it's end on 31st December. Progress is summarised below and detailed in Annex 1.

In the Western Isles, 8 chargers have been mechanically fitted across the 4 sites and the new electrical connections created. There has been a delay in receiving metering dates for these sites but Hitrans continue to explore every means of obtaining these as soon as possible. Once the metering is done, the chargers can be electrically connected, tested and commissioned. Funders have confirmed a 6 month grace period to allow this to happen.

In Argyll and Bute, 8 chargers have been mechanically fitted across 5 sites, the new electrical connections created and the metering set up. The chargers are due to be electrically connected and tested by the time this board meeting takes place, with commissioning due in December.

Likewise, in the Highlands, 2 chargers have been mechanically fitted in Portree, the new electrical connections created and the metering set up. The chargers are due to be

electrically connected & tested by the time this board meeting takes place, with commissioning due in December.

5 further chargers are due to be mechanically fitted across the 2 remaining Highland sites and the new electrical connections created by the time this board meeting takes place.

Glenfinnan Visitor centre had to be dropped as a site as the wayleaves process had reached a standstill with a neighbouring owner. Due to the high costs of unforeseen groundworks, the decision was made not to replace this site or charger, meaning FASTER will deliver a total of 23 chargers in the region.

A recorded stakeholder discussion on Scottish installations and the lessons learned over the course of the project can be accessed here: <https://youtu.be/VTvv52zuMT0>

PROJECT BUDGET

HITRANS has a significant budget in the FASTER project totalling €1,675,703, allowing for the installation of at least 24 rapid charge points.

RISK REGISTER

RTS Delivery

Impact – Positive

Comment – The FASTER project supports several RTS objectives, particularly in the field of low carbon transport and support for EV uptake.

Policy

Impact – Positive

Comment – FASTER is supporting broader policy work by conducting research on the procurement and installation of a rapid charging network and how this complements existing infrastructure.

Financial

Impact – Positive

Budget line and value – The project attracts a reimbursement rate of 85%.

Equality

Impact – Positive

Comment – FASTER aims to increase the number of publicly accessible charge points to encourage more EV drivers in the region.

RECOMMENDATION

Members are asked to note the report.

Report by: Gemma Robinson
Designation: FASTER Project Officer
Date: 21st March 2023

Annex 1

HITRANS – Live Sites

Site	Landowner	No. of Chargers	INSTALLATION PHASE						Commissioning Date (by SWARCO)
			Civils / 1st Fix Complete (Y/N)	New SSE electrical connection created	Charger mechanically fitted	EDF Metering complete	2nd (electrical) Fix Start Date		
Leverburgh Ferry Terminal	Western Isles	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Bailivanich (by Stepping Stones Restaurant)	Western Isles	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Stornoway, South Beach Car Park	Western Isles	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Lochboisdale (car park by Uist Gifts & Information)	Western Isles	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Dunoon	Argyll & Bute	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	w/c 20/11
Tarbert	Argyll & Bute	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	w/c 06/11	w/c 20/11
Rothesay	Argyll & Bute	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	w/c 20/11
Corran Halls	Argyll & Bute	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	w/c 20/11
Tobermory	Argyll & Bute	1	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	w/c 06/11	w/c 20/11
Portree Car Park	Highland Council	2	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	w/c 06/11	Dec
Balachulish Visitor Centre	Highland Council	4	w/c 06/11	w/c 06/11	w/c 06/11	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC
Strontian (by Oakwood Centre)	Highland Council	1	w/c 30/10	w/c 06/11	w/c 30/10	TBC	TBC	TBC	TBC