



## Case study: Mina and The Children's Society

**The  
Children's  
Society**

### The switch to electric

The Children's Society has been in existence for over 140 years and is there for children and young people when they need them most. Their services offer children vital support when they're facing huge life challenges such as abuse, exploitation, or neglect. They campaign tirelessly alongside young people, their partners and supporters to bring about a new society: a world where every single child grows up safe, happy, and filled with hope for the future.

They have over 104 retail units throughout England and one in Wales, with an ambition to expand in the years to come.

#### The switch to electric

When Interim Director of Retail Paul Tate was placed in charge of the charity's 14 vehicles, he wanted to make positive changes for the organisation and its drivers. As a medium-sized charity, the impetus is to be prudent with their budget, and this meant a change of approach around their fleet. While they'd traditionally bought internal combustion engine (ICE) vehicles outright and ran them beyond their economic life, in 2018 they made the move to leased vehicles.

This switch proved financially prudent, and as their ICE Renault Megane came to the end of their four year cycle, The Children's Society began to explore the idea of making the switch to electric vehicles (EVs), with five objectives in mind:

1. **To benefit their drivers** - Paul didn't want his drivers to be left out of pocket for driving a work vehicle, their EVs needed to reflect that.
2. **Better vehicles for the road** - There was a need to put The Children's Society's drivers in EVs that were technically better than their ICE equivalents.
3. **Reduce whole life costs** - The overall cost of running and charging EVs had to be less than running petrol or diesel cars.
4. **Bring down CO2 emissions** - Sustainability is important to charities, and transitioning to electric would lay the foundation for an environmentally-friendly future.
5. **Benefit-in-kind (BiK) advantages** - The switch to electric had to reduce the BiK cost to drivers compared to benchmarked company ICE cars.

#### Initial concerns

One of Paul's priorities was to make sure switching to EVs wouldn't affect his drivers financially or make their workdays more difficult because of charging needs. So he was concerned about reconciling costs for home and public charging, especially with the latter being more expensive.

A concern was that drivers would have to fund their business miles themselves through their domestic energy supplies until month-end, where they could then claim back the cost.

"I researched into the HMRC's [Advisory Electricity Rate \(AER\)](#), and even though the rate per mile is reviewed quarterly, it still didn't seem to reflect the actual cost drivers would incur for driving a company business vehicle." Paul said.

### **Finding the ideal solution**

While exploring the options around transitioning to EVs, fleet managers experienced in this space pointed Paul towards Mina. He picked up a direct line of enquiry with Mina, so that our solutions would be ready for The Children's Society's drivers as soon as their work EVs were on the road.

The Children's Society aims to stick with one supplier when it comes to their fleet, so each of their drivers uses a Kia Nero and those that have access to off-road parking have an Easee home charger installed. Mina became a key part of their supplier base with our radically simple payment solution for charging their EVs.

All of their drivers were given a [Mina Chargepass®](#) so they could top up their EVs with a tap of a single RFID card at thousands of public charge points. This reduces the need for them to carry multiple cards or download different charging apps for public charging. They also didn't have to claim back mileage expenses, or pay any upfront costs for charging their EVs while making long distance trips for work.

Drivers with off-road parking were set up with [Mina Homecharge®](#) so we would pay for their home charging sessions direct to their energy suppliers. This means they're never funding their own business miles, not even temporarily, which was one of Paul's main concerns.

Any month-end personal mileage claims are radically simplified for The Children's Society head office team and drivers. The business/personal mileage splitter gives each driver autonomy over personal miles driven in their EV, and allows their finance department to claim back those miles in payroll.

Paul's access to the dashboard in his Mina Account has also made a radical change to drivers' charging behaviour. Our Carbondgrid® reporting feature is an integration with the National Grid, and shows Paul which charge sessions use the cleanest energy. This information can be seen in 'real time' on the [fleet dashboard](#), broken down by employee or visualised across the entire business.

He's able to use this information to encourage the Children's Society drivers to actively seek cleaner charging times when charging both at home and in public.

### **The benefit of switching to EVs**

Overall, Paul has seen a huge success thanks to transitioning to electric vehicles. Over the four-year lease cycle, The Children's Society have estimated a £45,000 net saving in running costs since making the switch to EVs in January 2023.

This is partly thanks to Mina paying energy suppliers directly for each home charge session on behalf of every driver using Homecharge®, so The Children's Society don't have to use resources on reimbursing their drivers for business mileage.

With a few hybrids and a plug-in hybrid within the fleet, Paul also estimates that CO2 emissions have been reduced by 85% when compared to their petrol equivalents.

The Children's Society's drivers were initially anxious about making the transition to EVs. But after six months of use, the combination of Mina's payment solution and the fact that electric vehicles are easy to drive, with a wide range of safety features means those anxieties have been eradicated.

"The whole life cost analysis clearly shows that switching to electric vehicles has cost The Children's Society less than their petrol equivalents. All in all, both our drivers and our charity are very pleased with the transition to electric vehicles, but I would genuinely have been less confident about the move had we not had the opportunity to easily solve our home and public charging challenges without Mina."

**Paul Tate**, Interim Director of Retail and Trading, The Children's Society