



An innovative model for EV charging

EV charging

Community

Over two years ago the McKean St owners corporation began investigating the best model to install Electric Vehicle (EV) chargers in an affordable and equitable way. They came up with a neat and automated solution where the EV drivers are billed, without impacting residents who don't use the EV charging.

This low-rise apartment development sits near the heart of the Queens Parade shopping village in Fitzroy North. Built 20 years ago on an old factory site, it's now home to 20 apartments with a mix of owner occupiers, renters, families, and retirees.

Recognising the switch to EVs had started, and the need for EV charging at home was only going to grow, the Owners Corporation began to consider their options.

They investigated allowing individual residents to install a charging outlet in their respective parking spaces. Ultimately, this approach was ruled out due to technical and grid connection constraints, and the high cost to the individual.



Photos by Thompillai

An innovative scalable solution was found and several Level 2 (7kW) smart chargers were installed in common area parking spaces.

This solution made installing the chargers technically feasible, commercially viable and, importantly, acceptable to all owners and residents.

There are now three EVs regularly using the infrastructure, with several more expected over the next year.

"The equipment works seamlessly for those with EVs and doesn't financially impact those without" said Cleat Watson, Chair of the owners corporation.

"I can book for an hour to top up, or overnight for a full charge - the convenience means I'll never look back" said Geoff Coffey, resident owner and new EV owner

Funding the initiative

The owners corporation were thorough in their approach, considering both up front and operational costs.

Equipment capital, installation and commissioning

They drew from the maintenance fund to purchase the equipment. The cost is recovered back into the fund via a monthly access fee charged to all EV users. On forecast uptake this is expected to be recovered within a timeframe considered reasonable by the owners corporation.

Operational costs

The ongoing costs for electricity supply, software licensing, and maintenance are recovered via a fee per unit of charging. Chargefox software allows automatic direct debit to individual EV owners for each charging session.

Tips for establishing EV charging

Bruce and Cleat were the main drivers of their project. Their advice to others looking to follow in their footsteps is:

- Get the funding model right so that the project can proceed without opposition from owners who don't see themselves utilising the service
- Ensure rigorous project procurement control and detailed technical management and coordination
- Compare products and services. Make sure the equipment is high quality and the technology is simple, clear and supported over the long-term
- Smart software like Chargefox can significantly streamline the payment process reducing the burden, and costs, for strata managers
- Ideally, find an electrical contractor who knows the site and the equipment
- Liaise closely with the Owners Corporation Manager to ensure the Owners Corporation Committee is acting within its rights when implementing the installation, committing the funds, and allocating the space for the installation

Hear more from Cleat and Bruce in the High Life Expo [Charging Ahead seminar video](#).

Project suppliers

[Thompillai](#) - Project design and management

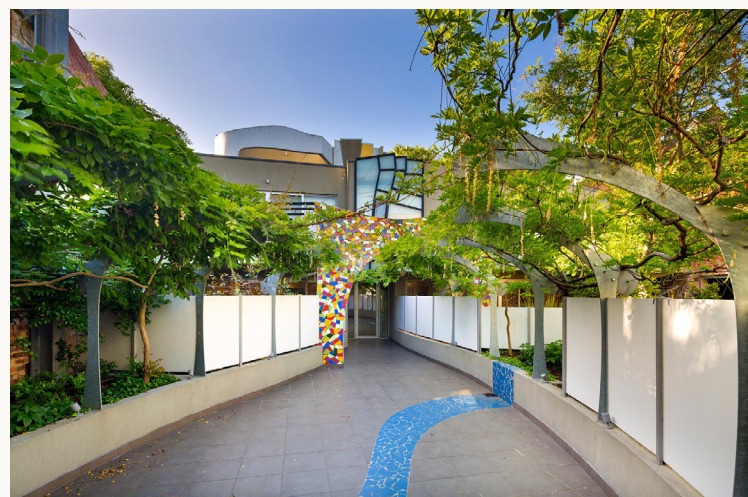
[JetCharge](#) - Charging hardware

[O'Briens Electrical Camberwell](#) - Installation and commissioning

[Chargefox](#) - Software platform for monitoring and billing

[Ace Body Corporate](#) - Procurement advice and project administration

Thank you to Bruce and Cleat for sharing their story.



Photos from top: Cleat using the shared charging station (Photo by Thompillai). JetCharge's technology (Photo by JetCharge). The apartment complex courtyard (Photo by Thompillai).

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