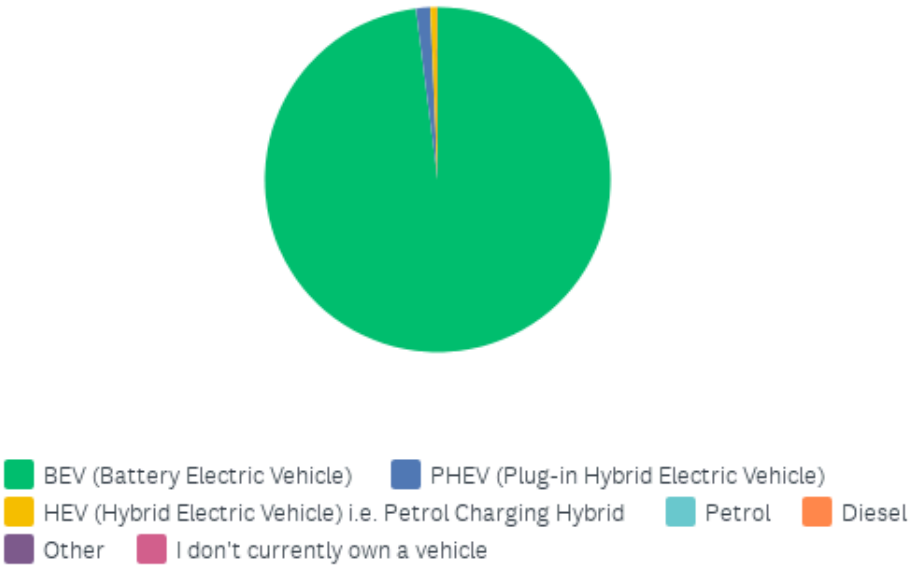
IEVOA Charge Point Blocking Survey Analysis - April 2021

In January 2021 we asked our members for feedback on their experiences with public EV charge point blocking.

Survey Results

We received 149 responses in total and we would like to take this opportunity to thank those of you who took the time and effort to participate. The response rate is somewhat lower than we had anticipated considering the number of discussions about blocking and ICEing we have seen on our Facebook group over the years. It continues to be important to stakeholder organisations such as ESB eCars that we are connected with our membership and can quickly provide mass feedback on important topics such as this which means they value our opinion and listen to us.

To start with we asked some general questions to learn a little more about the survey respondents. As you can see, the vast majority of respondents, 98%, were BEV drivers:



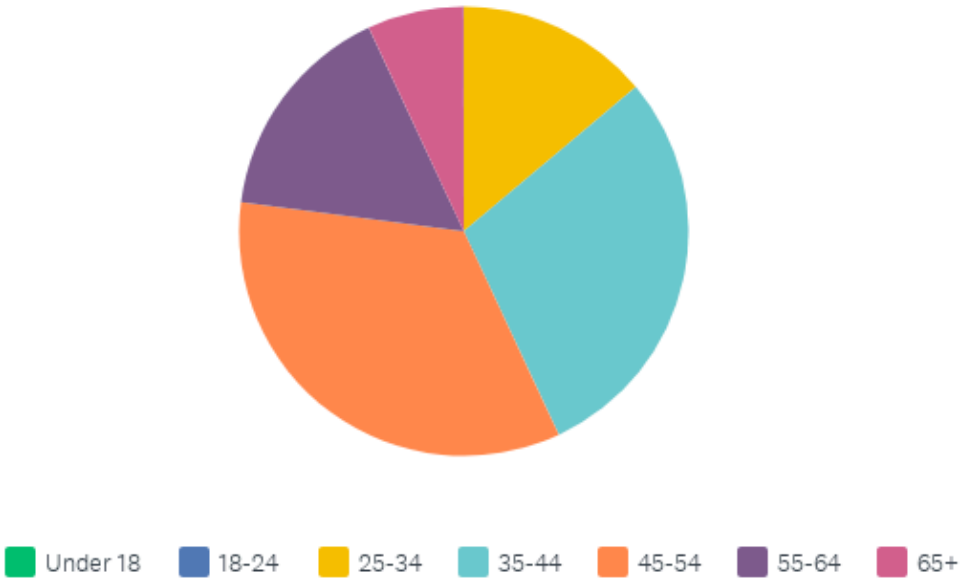
We asked what cars our respondents are driving, the majority are:

- Nissan - 37%
- Hyundai - 19%
- Tesla - 17%
- Renault - 8%
- Kia - 6%
- BMW - 5%
- VW - 3%

We asked the year of registration of cars our respondents are driving. 55% of cars are less than 3 years old:

- 2019 - 19%
- 2020 - 18%
- 2018 - 14%
- 2017 - 12%
- 2015 - 11%
- 2021 - 4%
- 2016 - 7%
- 2014 - 3%
- 2012 - 2%

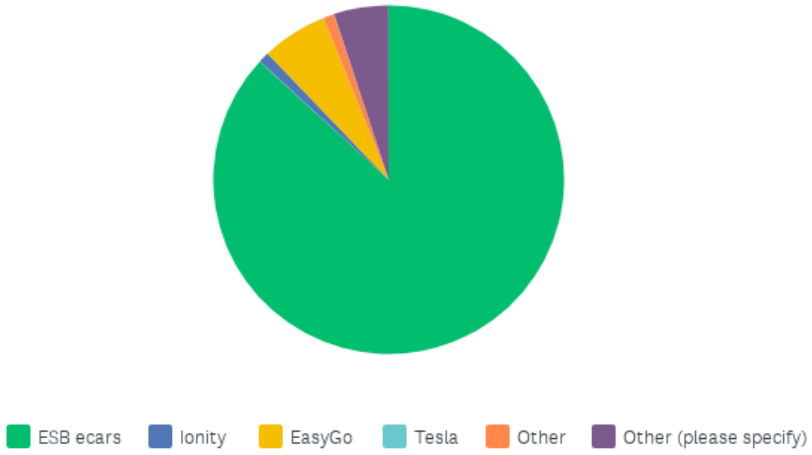
We asked the age demographic of our respondents. No respondents were under 25. Do we need to do more to encourage young EV drivers? What is preventing young drivers choosing EVs?:



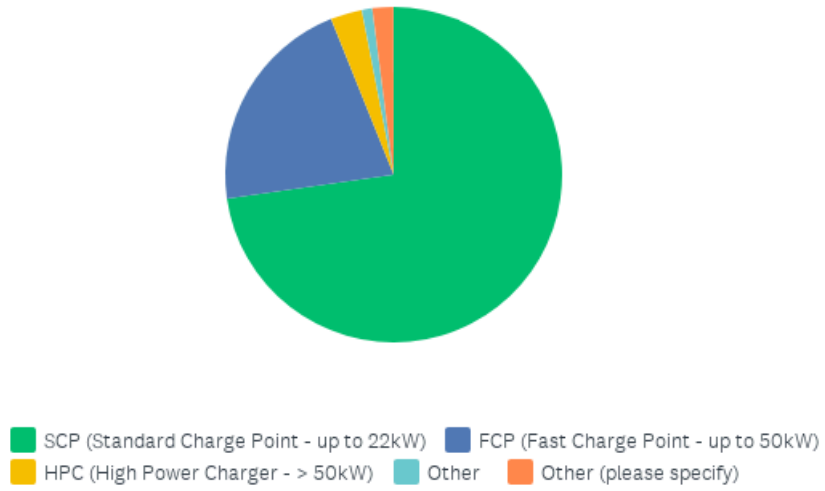
We asked in which Irish county respondents normally live (13% said Ireland!), we gained the following leading responses:

- Dublin - 26%
- Cork - 11%
- Wicklow - 5%
- Limerick - 5%
- Galway - 5%
- Kildare - 5%
- Meath - 4%
- Louth - 3%
- Wexford - 3%

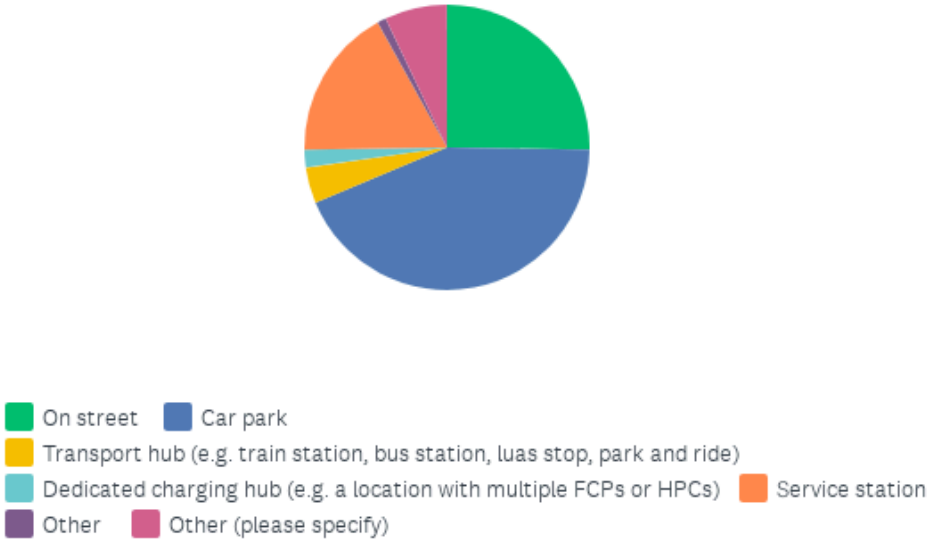
Moving on to the information about charge point blocking instances, the vast majority, 86%, of reports related to ESB eCars charge points:



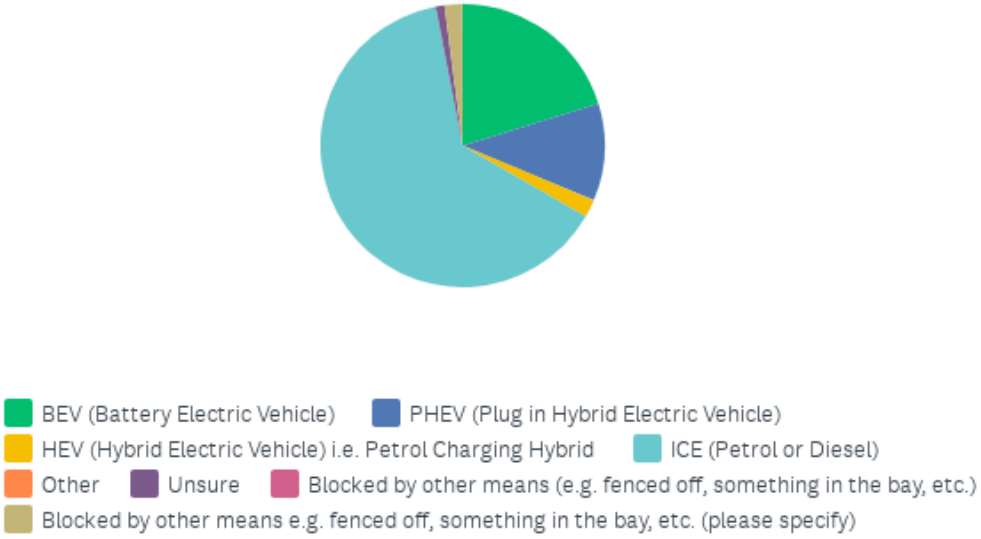
The vast majority of blocking incidents, 72%, ratated to Standard Charge Points followed by 21% for Fast Charge Points:



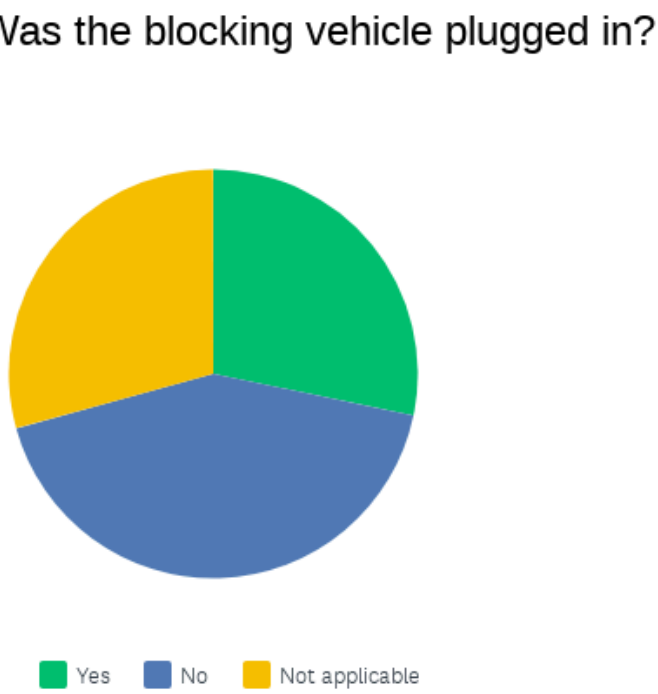
The situation of blocked chargers was quite varied with the majority, 43%, in car parks. Other popular locations for blocking were on street, 25%, and at service stations, 17%:



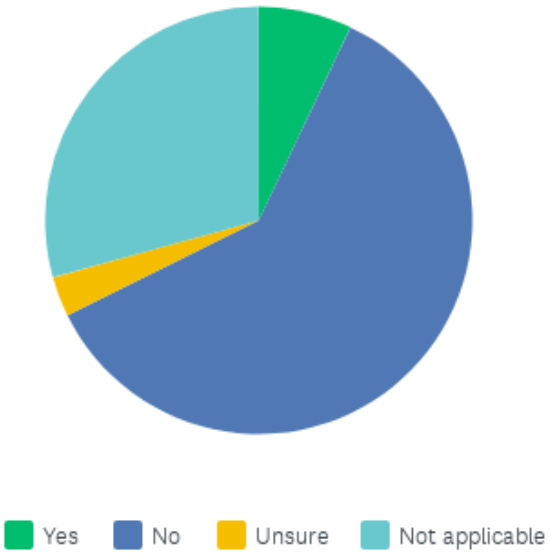
The type of blocking vehicles were predominantly ICE, 63%, but also a disappointing number of BEVs and PHEVs, 30% combined, indicating that a lot more education is required about charging etiquette amongst current EV owners.



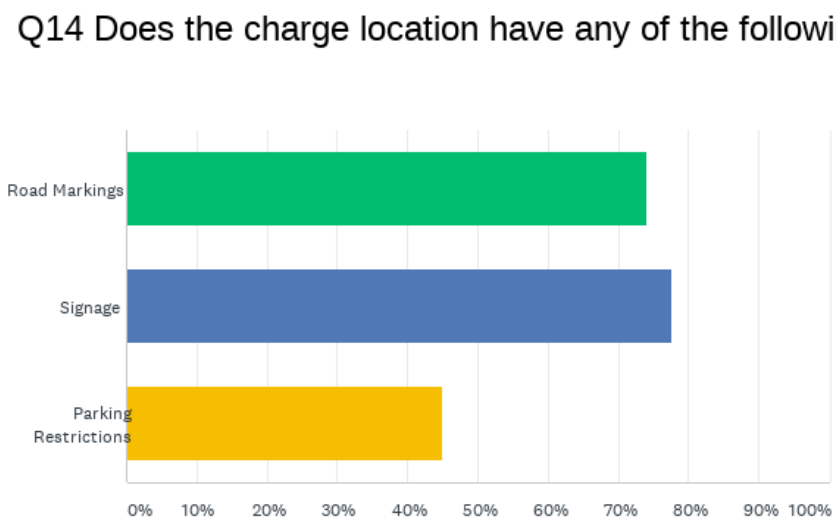
A shocking 72% of vehicles blocking chargers were not even plugged in indicating that there is a desperate need to stop drivers using charging bays as parking spaces:



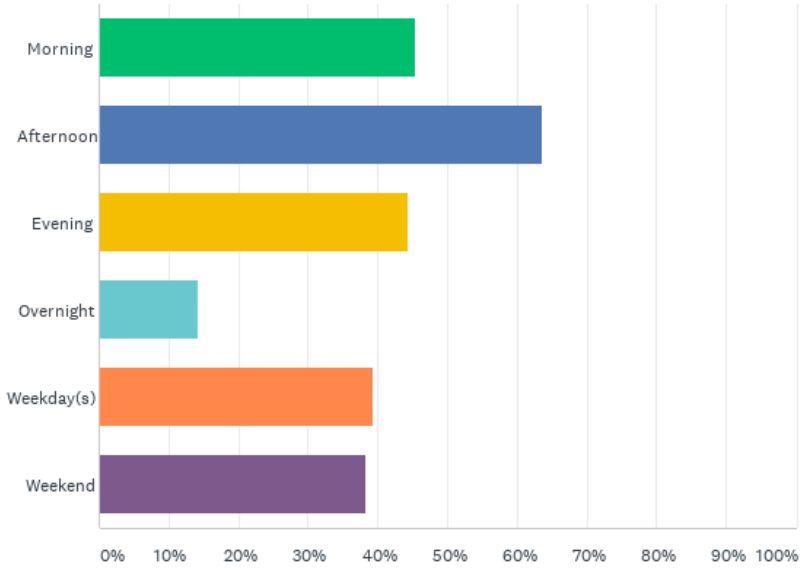
To corroborate responses to the previous question we asked respondents whether the blocking vehicle was actually charging. There is an argument of course that if a vehicle is physically charging then it is not actually blocking. With overstay fees on ESB eCars FCPs after 45 minutes the expectation is that for these chargers at least that owners should move on after 45 minutes, but some may of course accept the overstay fee and continue charging. This could indicate that the way overstay fees are applied should be reviewed.



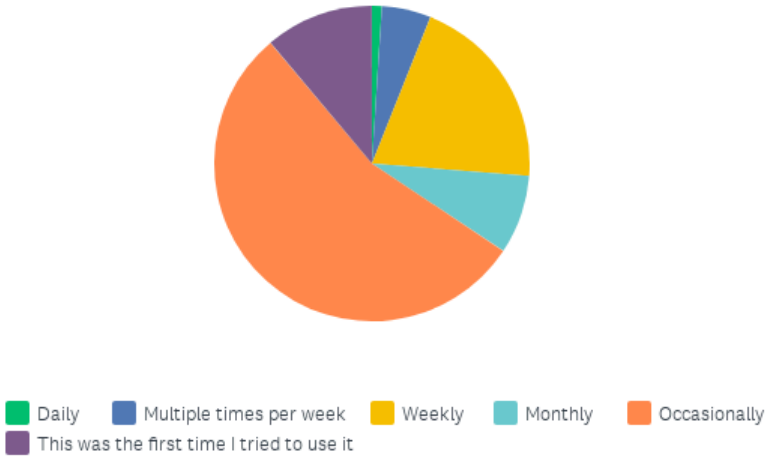
We asked respondents whether blocked charging locations had any deterrents such as signage, road marking and/or parking restrictions. It appears that the majority of locations have at least one deterrent in place which indicates once again that education and enforcement are both very much needed to prevent blocking.



We asked when charge point blocking was taking place but were unable to determine any particular pattern in these results:



We asked respondents how often they used the charger that was suffering blocking. Over half indicated that they only used the charger occasionally. What is not known is whether they would use the charger more if it were not blocked.



We received 63 other free text comments on a variety of topics including:

- The need to review overstay fees
- PHEVs using FCPs
- Recommendations for new charge point locations
- Lack of charge bay markings or marking which require renewing
- Blockers often being repeat offenders or known individuals
- Bad parking by vehicles charging blocking multiple spaces
- Charging cables at FCPs being too short for certain vehicles to use easily.

We will provide this information to the relevant charge point operators for further analysis and hopefully action.

Conclusions

Charge Point blocking is clearly still a big problem for EV owners who need to charge their vehicles in public and causes significant inconvenience and frustration. More needs to be done by charge point operators to ensure that charging bays are not blocked. Many charging locations are clearly marked yet are still used regularly as parking spaces by unscrupulous or uneducated drivers. The only way to tackle these issues are by stringent enforcement of the restrictions in place. Specifically, there needs to be a way for charge point operators to easily determine when a charging bay is occupied if the vehicle located there is actually plugged in and/or charging. This will allow them to act quickly to combat blocking incidents.