

# Switching to an electric vehicle: saving thousands, cutting emissions

## Randwick City Council News Item

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### News Topic

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Since switching to an electric vehicle just over a year ago, Dr Jack Purcell hasn't looked back. The Coogee resident had recently returned home after working in Vancouver, Canada, for a few years when he started a new job as a doctor at Liverpool Hospital in March 2025.

"I'd made a promise that the next car I bought back in Sydney would be electric because I didn't like that I was filling up my car with petrol and contributing to emissions," he says. "Going 50 kilometres to Liverpool five to seven days a week is an exorbitant amount of driving, so that solidified my plan to get an EV."

In the past year, Jack has saved thousands of dollars by recharging instead of refuelling. "It's the difference of \$40 a week versus either \$200 or \$300, so it's massive."

### The case for public chargers

Jack is among a growing cohort of eastern suburbs drivers switching to an EV. There are already around 3,000 EVs in Randwick LGA, accounting for five per cent of all road vehicles - twice the New South Wales average.

Julie Delvecchio, Randwick resident and Chief Executive of the Electric Vehicle Council, says these figures are part of a broader nationwide uptake of EVs, driven largely by global fuel insecurity and cost of living pressures. But fears over infrastructure are holding some back from making the switch.

"Some consumers are concerned about how far they can travel on a single charge, and they worry about whether an EV will have enough range for them to do what they want to do," Ms Delvecchio says.

"People won't make the switch to electric vehicles if they can't see chargers, if they think they can't charge easily or they don't know how to do it. Making them visible is really important because it gives drivers the confidence that there will be somewhere for them to charge."

Dr Purcell says charging his electric vehicle is easy, even without a charger at home. He uses street chargers when he needs to top up.



### **An eight-minute walk to charge**

With 60 per cent of eastern suburbs residents living in apartments and more than 50 per cent renting, public charging is crucial. It's why [Randwick City Council joined forces with neighbouring Waverley and Woollahra Councils in 2019 to kick off the state's first network of Council-owned public charging stations](#), powered entirely by renewable energy.

Since then, the eastern suburbs network has grown to more than 300 stations. That includes 124 in Randwick LGA with another 22 planned for this year. Most residents are already within an eight-minute walk of a public charger, which they can find by simply typing 'charging station' in Google or Apple maps.

Sam Kelley, Electric Vehicle Project Manager at Randwick City, Waverley and Woollahra Councils, says the transition to EVs is the single largest change needed to achieve net-zero emissions and that will only be possible through equitable access to charging.

"We have to have a good public charging network and initiatives for apartments to install chargers, otherwise around half the residents are just not going to be able to transition to electric transport," he says.

### **Charging at home**

Residents with off-street parking are encouraged to charge their EV at home. It's easy, it's convenient and it frees up public charging stations for those who need them. Charging is as simple as using a 'Level 1' cable to plug into a regular power point to charge overnight, or upgrading to a faster 'Level 2' charger which generally takes two to five hours.

While slightly trickier for apartment dwellers, it's not impossible to charge at home. [Apartment buildings in Randwick, Waverley and Woollahra LGAs can sign up to the new EV Charging for Apartments Program \(Smart Plugs\) to receive a 50 per cent rebate \(up to \\$10,000 per building\)](#). The smart plugs look like regular power points but have innovative features designed specifically for managing electric vehicle charging in apartment blocks.

### **Making the switch**

Jack admits he was taking a leap of faith when he bought his “passion project”. With no off-street parking available at home, he would be relying on a combination of Council-operated and privately owned charging stations to charge his EV. One year on, he's had no regrets.

“The infrastructure is there. Sydney is a major city. It's got all of these things set up, and you just have to take the leap,” he says. “We've driven to Byron Bay and found chargers all the way along the highway. We've done Canberra, Goulburn and the Blue Mountains. You obviously get really good at mapping before you leave and know where the chargers are, but that's just part of having an EV.”

“It's so much cleaner. You never go to a stinky petrol station again. And plus the cars are just so much nicer; the interior, they're quieter and they have better technology interfaces because they're not focused on making the car such a complex engine anymore.”

<https://www.randwick.nsw.gov.au/about-us/news/news-items/2026/july/switching-to-an-electric-vehicle-saving-thousands,-cutting-emissions>