

Published: 16/06/2013 09:00 - Updated: 14/06/2013 15:03

New electric charging point in Northampton

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NORTHAMPTON based MAHLE Powertrain has showcased its unique electric 'range extender' vehicle, along with Northampton's first electric vehicle (EV) charging point at its St. James Mill Road headquarters.

The vehicle has been designed to alleviate 'range anxiety' – where consumers are put off electric vehicles through fears that they are unable to travel for significant distances between charging.

The MAHLE range extender vehicle is a plug-in EV with a compact, twin cylinder petrol engine on board.

For the majority of the time the car can be used as an EV with the engine only starting on longer journeys when the battery charge level drops below 25%.

The engine has a built-in generator which provides electric power to recharge the battery as the car is being driven.

The petrol tank can be refilled like a conventional car, and the car's battery can be plugged in and charged up. With environmental and economic factors driving the development of EVs, improving vehicle range and reducing costs are key to the future development of these types of vehicles.

Reflecting its commitment to future powertrain technologies, MAHLE has also installed Northampton's first EV charging point at its premises. The charging point can be used to charge the range extender vehicle, and other plug-in EVs that visit the site.

Daren Mottershead, Sales and Marketing Manager from MAHLE said: "This vehicle proves that range extended EVs are not just a great idea in principle, but that they also can, and do, work in everyday life. We want to show people that range extended EVs are a practical and viable option that help reduce carbon emissions, without costing the earth.

“We are really proud of this technology, and delighted to have installed the first EV charging point in Northampton.

“Much of this technology has been developed right here in the county and it is testament to the local team that so much has been achieved to date.”

MAHLE is just one of 1000 companies in Northamptonshire’s High Performance Technologies (HPT) network, a cluster of thriving businesses in Northamptonshire, operating in sectors such as motorsport, automotive, aerospace, defence and low carbon technologies.

Tim Bagshaw, Head of Investment at Northamptonshire Enterprise Partnership (NEP), a well-known champion and supporter of the HPT sector in the county, said: “With such a strong concentration of skills in the county in low carbon and related sectors, Northamptonshire is world recognised as a leading location for the development of EVs and related technology.

“MAHLE’s work is helping to push forward EV technology and it’s incredibly exciting that such progressive new development is taking place here in Northamptonshire.”