

LOW EMISSION ZONES

Background

Modern vehicles have much lower emissions due to European vehicle emissions legislation ('Euro standards'). The legislation was initially introduced in 1993 (Euro 1) and were tightened in 1996-1997 (Euro 2), in 2001 (Euro 3), in 2006 (Euro 4) and in 2009 (Euro5). Euro6 should be introduced from 2012. The faster adoption of cleaner road vehicles therefore offers opportunity for reducing emissions.

However to speed up the benefits from the new emission standards a **Low Emission Zone** could be introduced. This is a defined area that can only be entered by specified vehicles meeting certain emissions criteria or standards, e.g. certain Euro standards. An LEZ prohibits older vehicles from operating in an area and so accelerates the turnover of the vehicle fleet (or requires operators of older vehicles to fit abatement equipment to their vehicles). Although traffic volumes do not necessarily change, vehicles travelling in an area have lower emissions, and this leads directly to air quality improvements.

London scheme

Area: The London Low Emission Zone includes all of the Greater London area.

Vehicles: The scheme targets Lorries, buses and coaches. These vehicles have disproportionately high emissions per vehicle and targeting those produces greatest emissions reductions for least cost. However, in future the zone could be extended to include vans (subject to further investigation of the socio-economic effects of such a scheme on small companies/owner drivers) and taxis (though taxis should be addressed earlier through the licensing process).

Legislation and Enforcement: The Low Emission Zone is enforced using fixed and mobile cameras, which read vehicle's registration number plates as they drive within the zone. The registration plate is then checked against a database of registered vehicles, which meet the emissions standards, are exempt or are registered for a discount. If the vehicle does not meet the standards or qualify for an exemption or discount then it has to pay the daily charge.

Charge: The charge for bring a non compliant Lorries, buses or coaches into the Low Emission Zone is £200. The charge for heavy vans and minibuses is £100.

Emission Criteria: There are four agreed phases of the London zone. By the listed dates all vehicles should comply with the criteria or pay the charge.

4 th February 2008	Euro3 for particulate matter for Lorries over 12tonnes
7 th July 2008	Euro3 for particulate matter for Lorries between 3.5tonnes and 12tonnes, buses and coaches
4 th October 2010	Euro3 for particulate matter for larger vans and minibuses
3 rd January 2012	Euro4 for particulate matter for Lorries over 3.5tonnes and buses or coaches over 5tonnes

The changes expected in October 2010 have been postponed following the recent change of Mayor in London.

Exemptions: The following are exempt: Tractors, Mowing Machines, Agricultural and Farming machinery, mobile cranes, road and building construction machinery, Historic vehicles (pre 1973), Military vehicles and Showman's vehicles that have been custom built and are permanently fitted with equipment forming part of a show.

Bromsgrove: The following would need to be addressed in the development of a Low Emission Zone for Bromsgrove:

Decision

- Is this a policy tool that all the Councils agree is worth investigating for Bromsgrove
- Does it have the support of the key stakeholders (e.g. Both County Councils, West Mercia Police, Chamber of Commerce, other parties need identifying)

Structure

- The aims and objectives of the Low Emission Zone
- The area to be covered by the Low Emission Zone
- The measuring of the current situation in the area proposed
- Which authority would take the decision to implement the Low Emission Zone?
- Which authority would be responsible for implementation?
- Which authority would be responsible for future management?

Operation

- The vehicles that would be exempt
- How to encourage operators using the zone to comply with the measures
- The measures that would be taken against those breaking the terms of the zone

Day to day management

- How would use of the zone be monitored?
- Which authority would be responsible for policing the zone?
- Which authority would deal with those found breaking the terms of the zone?
- Monitoring of the success of the zone in meeting the aims and objectives
- Monitoring of the success of the zone as a policy tool

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