

Clean Air Greater Manchester

Preparing for cleaner air in Greater Manchester



What this means for hackney carriages and private hires

13 December 2023

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Taxis play an important role in helping clean up the air under GM's investment-led, non-charging Clean Air Plan and GM's ten local authorities are proposing a £30.5m fund to support the GM-licensed hackney and private hire trade upgrade to cleaner vehicles.

It will be for government to decide whether GM can proceed with the funding proposals for the investment-led, non-charging clean air plan.

Cleaning up the air

The ten Greater Manchester (GM) local authorities are under a legal direction from government to meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide on local roads in the shortest possible time and by 2026 at the latest.

GM has illegal levels of nitrogen dioxide air pollution on some local roads across the city-region. This affects everyone's health, particularly the most vulnerable people in our society: deprived communities, children, elderly people and those with chronic conditions like asthma, heart disease, stroke and some cancers.

Public Health England calculated that poor air quality contributed to the equivalent of 1,200 early deaths per year in GM in 2016 through its **Public Health Outcomes Framework**, which gave a spatial breakdown of deaths attributable to air pollution.

The ten GM local authorities remain committed to cleaning up the air residents breathe by **delivering an investment-led, non-charging GM Clean Air Plan** that does not put jobs, livelihoods and businesses at risk.

The transformational Bee Network and investment in zero-emission buses will also contribute to a significant improvement in air quality, tackling not just nitrogen dioxide but other pollutants too. They will also support GM's ambitions to achieve carbon neutrality by 2038.

Why no GM-wide Clean Air Zone?

You might have seen signs for a Clean Air Zone on our roads. That's because our first Clean Air Plan included plans for a GM-wide category C charging Clean Air Zone.

But challenging economic conditions following the pandemic meant **government agreed that this charging Clean Air Zone would NOT be introduced on 30 May 2022.**



That's because the pandemic resulted in significant vehicle supply chain issues, rising vehicle prices, and a cost-of-living crisis. The original Clean Air Plan was no longer the right solution and could have caused significant financial hardship.

At the same time, it would not have met the government's legal direction (issued before the pandemic) to meet legal limits for harmful nitrogen dioxide on local roads by 2024. Government issued a new legal direction to meet legal limits as soon as possible and by 2026.

The GM case for an investment-led plan, which was submitted to government in July 2022, does not include a charging Clean Air Zone.

During autumn 2022, work to develop the new Clean Air Plan included targeted engagement and research with key impacted groups, including the taxi and PHV sector. In January 2023, the government asked for further evidence to support the case for the investment-led plan.

Latest Clean Air Plan status

In December 2023, GM will submit evidence to government in support of its investment-led, non-charging Clean Air Plan. This has been benchmarked against a category C charging Clean Air Zone in the regional centre (Manchester and Salford), as requested by government.

The proposed non-charging plan includes a package of measures to meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide on local roads:

- Further investment in zero-emission electric buses for the Bee Network.
- Measures to manage traffic flow on some roads in the regional centre (Manchester and Salford).
- A £30.5m Clean Taxi Fund to provide financial support to help every eligible GM-licensed cab upgrade to a cleaner vehicle.

It will be for government to decide whether GM can proceed with a Clean Taxi Fund for its investment-led, non-charging Clean Air Plan.

Clean Taxi Fund

The proposed £30.5m Greater Manchester Clean Taxi Fund would be drawn from Clean Air funds previously awarded by government to GM for the purposes of meeting legal limits for nitrogen dioxide on local roads.

Funding would be targeted towards the upgrade of taxis (Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles) licensed to a Greater Manchester local authority. This includes:

- A £22.5m Clean Taxi Fund providing grants of between £3,770 and £12,560 to help all eligible taxis (Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles) licensed with a Greater Manchester local authority meet a new minimum emission standard by 31 December 2025.
- An £8m Electric Hackney Upgrade Fund providing grants of between £7,530 and £12,560 to help owners of GM-licensed Hackney Carriages which meet the minimum emission standard upgrade to a Zero Emission Capable vehicle.

The proposed Clean Taxi Fund is tied to the need for GM-licensed taxis to meet a minimum vehicle emission standard of Euro 4 petrol or Euro 6 diesel - so that by 31 December 2025 all GM Taxis would be compliant with emission standards.

All GM local authorities, in anticipation of government agreement to the proposed Clean Taxi Fund, will need to start the process to adopt the emission standard into licensing conditions, if not already in place.

Eligibility

The proposed Clean Taxi Fund would provide a grant to owners of EVERY eligible taxi licensed with a Greater Manchester local authority as at 20 December 2023.

For taxis to be classed as compliant with the minimum emission standard, Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles will need to be either Euro 4 Petrol or Euro 6 Diesel, or be a fully Zero Emissions Capable (ZEC) electric vehicle.

It will be for government to decide whether GM can proceed with a Clean Taxi Fund for its investment-led, non-charging Clean Air Plan.





Proposed Taxi Grants

GM has listened to feedback from the trade and is proposing that financial support under the investment-led plan is issued directly to applicants, who can prove they meet relevant criteria, rather than through approved dealerships. This would give more flexibility over selling and buying a new vehicle.

Taxi grants would be largely being aligned with the original GM Clean Air Plan approved in 2021, with a 25.6% uplift reflecting inflation and changes in prices since grants were originally developed.

It is proposed that the following grants are made available:

 Vehicle	 Grant
Upgrade to compliant wheelchair accessible vehicle (Euro 4 Petrol or Euro 6 Diesel)	£6,280
Upgrade to new zero emission capable wheelchair accessible vehicle (Running Cost Grant)	£12,560
Upgrade to used zero emission capable wheelchair accessible vehicle	£12,560
Upgrade to compliant non-wheelchair accessible vehicle (Euro 4 Petrol or Euro 6 Diesel)	£3,770
Upgrade to new zero emission capable non-wheelchair accessible vehicle (Running Cost Grant)	£7,530
Upgrade to used zero emission capable non-wheelchair accessible vehicle	£7,530
Upgrade to non-wheelchair accessible vehicle, 6+ seat (Euro 4 Petrol or Euro 6 Diesel)	£6,280

Will all GM licence holders registered with a non-compliant vehicle get a grant?

The total funding requirement of £30.5m is based on the total eligible vehicle population so we are confident that it will cover all valid applications from owners of non-compliant vehicles and upgrades from compliant hackneys to electric. GM's proposal is to fund EVERY eligible vehicle licensed with a GM local authority as at 20 December 2023, and the funding assumes every eligible taxi owner will take up the grant.

When will the fund open?

No date can be confirmed yet. This is because government need to agree to GM's proposals for an investment-led Clean Air Plan for the Clean Taxi Fund to go ahead.

Will my Hackney Carriage or Private Hire Vehicle be charged? Can the government still require a charging Clean Air Zone?

GM's local authorities are committed to a non-charging Clean Air Plan and supporting the local taxi trade to upgrade vehicles. Our investment-led plan does not include a charging Clean Air Zone.

It is for government to decide whether GM proceeds with an investment-led, non-charging Clean Air Plan or a charging Clean Air Zone.

GM is submitting evidence to show that only the investment-led plan would meet the government direction to meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide by 2026.

The modelling work shows that a charging Clean Air Zone would not meet legal limits for nitrogen dioxide in 2025 or 2026, failing to meet the government's compliance date of 2026.

Find out more and get in touch

If you have any enquiries about the Greater Manchester Clean Air Plan, please contact info@cleanairgm.com or call **0161 244 1333** (support for non-English speakers is available).

To sign up for updates as the new plan is developed, visit: cleanairgm.com/#newsletter
For media enquiries, call **0161 244 1055** or email mediarelations@tfgm.com