

# Have your say on proposed changes to the Congestion Charge



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## Purpose of this leaflet

Transport for London (TfL) regularly reviews the Congestion Charging scheme to ensure it remains effective in reducing traffic and congestion in central London, and to improve the operation of the scheme.

This leaflet explains the changes that TfL is proposing to make to the Congestion Charging scheme. These changes include:

- Creating a new Ultra Low Emission Discount to replace the Greener and Electric Vehicle Discounts
- Increasing the penalty charge from £120 to £130
- Removing the option to pay the charge in shops and petrol stations.

We are seeking your views about the proposed changes set out in this leaflet. You can respond to the consultation online at [tfl.gov.uk/ccyourviews](http://tfl.gov.uk/ccyourviews) or by completing and returning the questionnaire provided at the back of this leaflet.

The consultation ends on 8 February 2013. Following the consultation, if the Mayor decides to approve the proposals, they would come into effect in spring 2013.

This leaflet is also available on request in other languages, as well as large print and audio CD. It may take up to 10 working days to arrive. Please call 0844 544 9780\*.

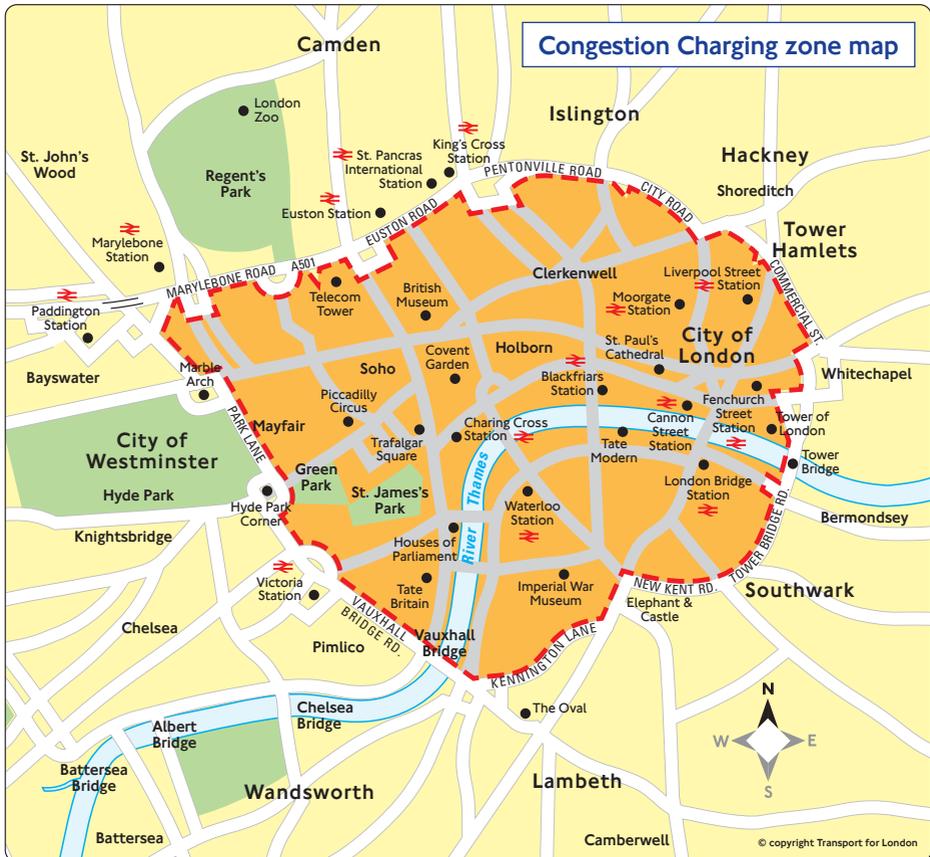
\*Calls from BT landlines cost up to 5p per minute. Cost of calls from other lines may vary.

# The Congestion Charging scheme

The Congestion Charge applies to all vehicles being driven within the Congestion Charging zone from 7am to 6pm, Monday to Friday, unless they are exempt or registered with TfL for a discount.

The £10 daily charge is payable in advance or before midnight on the day of travel. Drivers paying by midnight of the next charging day after travelling in the zone pay £12.

To find out more information about the Congestion Charging scheme, visit [www.cclondon.com](http://www.cclondon.com)



Congestion Charging zone boundary	Central London Congestion Charging zone. Residents' 90% discount applies	Areas of open space	Charged roads
			Uncharged roads

# Creating a new Ultra Low Emission Discount

## Background

The Greener Vehicle Discount has succeeded in increasing the proportion of lower emission vehicles within the Congestion Charging zone, helping to reduce emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and air pollutants. However, since the Greener Vehicle Discount was introduced in January 2011, the number of qualifying car models has tripled and many of these cars no longer have the lowest emissions on the market.

The number of vehicles able to meet the Greener Vehicle Discount criteria is constantly growing, and without a tightening of the emissions criteria, there could be a significant increase in the numbers of vehicles within the Congestion Charging zone. This would add to traffic congestion, increasing overall emissions of CO<sub>2</sub> and air pollutants, which would undermine the purpose of the discount.

## Proposal

TfL proposes to replace the Greener and Electric Vehicle Discounts, with a new Ultra Low Emission Discount.

From 1 July 2013, all electric vehicles and cars/vans (light goods vehicles not exceeding 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight) which emit 75g/km of CO<sub>2</sub> or less and meet the Euro 5 standard\* for air quality, would qualify for a 100% discount from the Congestion Charge if they are registered with TfL.

Plug-in hybrid electric cars and vans that are on the TfL approved list, are currently eligible for the Electric Vehicle Discount and would qualify for the new Ultra Low Emission Discount.

An annual payment of £10 per vehicle would be required at the point of registration for the Ultra Low Emission Discount and for each subsequent year that the discount is renewed.

\*This is a European Union standard, that limits the levels of air pollutant emissions for new vehicles sold in Europe, with which all vehicles manufacturers must comply.

A pure electric vehicle uses an electric motor for propulsion, powered by energy stored in a battery. No petrol or diesel is used. A plug-in hybrid electric vehicle uses a rechargeable battery pack that can be charged from an external source in addition to a conventional petrol or diesel engine.

The Euro 5 standard would be met by any car registered as new with the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) on or after 1 January 2011 and any van registered as new on or after 1 January 2012.

The Ultra Low Emission Discount would offer a technology neutral approach and, unlike the Greener Vehicle Discount, both cars and vans that meet the emissions criteria would be eligible for the discount. Including vans in the discount should encourage the uptake of ultra low emission commercial vehicles. In the future, hydrogen, petrol or diesel vehicles may become available that also meet the eligibility criteria for the Ultra Low Emission Discount.

The Ultra Low Emission Discount contributes to the Mayor’s policy to promote electric vehicles and his aspiration to make London the European capital for electric vehicles. It would also align with Government policy to encourage the use of ultra low emission vehicles.

Eligible vehicles	Qualifying criteria
<b>Pure electric vehicles</b>	Electric cars, vans, lorries or quadricycles that run solely on batteries. Eligible vehicles will have the fuel type recorded as ‘electric’ on the V5C car registration document issued by the DVLA or be exempt from Vehicle Excise Duty because they are electrically propelled vehicles.
<b>Ultra low emission cars</b>	Passenger cars that emit less than 75g/km of CO <sub>2</sub> , as recorded on the V5C car registration document, and meet the Euro 5 emissions standard.
<b>Ultra low emission vans</b>	Vans (light goods vehicles not exceeding 3.5 tonnes) that emit 75g/km or less of CO <sub>2</sub> and meet the Euro 5 emissions standard.
*Motorcycles do not pay the Congestion Charge	

## Benefits

Creating a new Ultra Low Emission Discount to replace the current Greener and Electric Vehicle Discounts has the potential to:

- Reduce traffic volumes and congestion in the Congestion Charging zone from the increasing numbers of cars eligible for the Greener Vehicle Discount
- Further reduce air pollutant and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from traffic in the Congestion Charging zone
- Offer a technology neutral discount, open to any fuel type
- Encourage a shift to the cleanest ultra low emission vehicles.

## Current Greener and Electric Vehicle Discount holders

TfL proposes that the Greener and Electric Vehicle Discounts would be closed to new registrations on 28 June 2013.

Owners of vehicles already registered for the Greener Vehicle Discount would continue to receive the 100% discount for their car for a further two years, until 26 June 2015, and would not need to take any action to ensure this. However, if a vehicle owner sells the vehicle during this period, the new owner would not be eligible for the Greener Vehicle Discount.

Owners of vehicles currently registered for the Greener Vehicle Discount would have to pay the daily Congestion Charge from 29 June 2015.

Vehicles registered for the current Electric Vehicle Discount would automatically qualify for the new Ultra Low Emission Discount. Drivers of these vehicles would not need to take any action as TfL would automatically transfer the vehicle to the new discount type.

Drivers would be required to pay the annual renewal fee of £10 when their discount becomes due for renewal. This is in keeping with the annual registration fee which applies to other types of discounts.

## Removing the option to pay the charge in shops and petrol stations

### Background

There are many ways drivers can pay the Congestion Charge, including using cash to pay in advance or until midnight on the day of travel at selected shops and petrol stations.

Over time, the number of customers paying the charge in this way has fallen. Only 6% of charge purchases are now made at retail outlets, as most payments are now made by CC Auto Pay, online, by text messaging or by phone. The retail payment channel is also expensive for TfL to operate.

### Proposal

TfL proposes to close the retail payment channel on 28 June 2013. After this date, drivers would no longer be able to pay the Congestion Charge in shops or petrol stations using cash.

### Benefits

Removing the retail payment channel would reduce the cost of operating the Congestion Charging scheme. Any increase in TfL's net revenue as a result of the change would continue to be reinvested in improvements to transport in London.

### Alternative ways to pay the Congestion Charge

CC Auto Pay is an automated payment system that automatically records the number of days a vehicle travels within the charging zone each month and bills the account holder's payment card accordingly. Drivers registered for CC Auto Pay avoid fines and pay a reduced daily charge of £9 instead of £10. An annual £10 registration charge per vehicle applies to register for CC Auto Pay.

In addition, drivers can pay online at [cclondon.com](http://cclondon.com) or pay by phone in advance or by midnight the following charging day.

Drivers can register with TfL to pay by text message before midnight on the day of travel.

Drivers can also pay the charge in advance by post. TfL needs to receive payment 10 days before the date of travel.

## Penalty charge increase

### Background

If a driver who has driven through the Congestion Charging Zone has not paid the daily charge by midnight on the next charging day, they could receive a Penalty Charge Notice.

### Proposal

TfL proposes to increase the penalty charge from £120 to £130. This would bring the penalty charge in line with other motoring penalty charges across London. This is only the third increase to the penalty charge since the Congestion Charge was introduced in 2003.

From 29 April 2013, the penalty charge would be £130, reduced to £65 if paid within 14 days and increased to £195 if not paid within 28 days.

## Next steps

This statutory consultation ends on 8 February 2013.

TfL will consider all the comments provided during the consultation and prepare a report, which will be considered by the Mayor.

The Mayor will then make a decision as to whether or not to go ahead with the proposals, with or without modifications. Once a decision has been made, TfL will publicise the outcome, along with the reasons for the decision.

Should the Mayor decide to proceed, the scheme changes would be introduced as follows;

- Penalty charge increase - 29 April 2013
- Closure of the Greener and Electric Vehicle Discounts - 28 June 2013
- Closure of the retail payment channel - 28 June 2013
- Introduction of the Ultra Low Emission Discount - 1 July 2013.

An information campaign would be launched to help ensure that drivers are aware of the changes to the way that the Congestion Charging scheme would operate.

### **Your views**

To provide your views on the proposed changes to the Congestion Charging scheme explained in this leaflet, please respond online at [tfl.gov.uk/ccyourviews](http://tfl.gov.uk/ccyourviews), or complete and return the attached questionnaire by **Friday 8 February 2013**.

### **Privacy notice**

Transport for London (TfL), its subsidiaries and service providers, and the Greater London Authority will use your personal information for the purpose of administering this consultation and assessing opinions on the proposed changes to the Congestion Charging scheme. Your personal information will be properly safeguarded and processed in accordance with the requirements of the Data Protection Act 1998.

Responses to the consultation may be made publicly available, but any personal information will be kept confidential. You do not have to provide any personal information, but this information may help TfL to understand the range of responses. For example, responses may be analysed by postcode to help identify local issues.

