

Information Sheet – Key Questions

Sheffield Clean Air Zone - Coaches and Minibuses

The following information is specific to minibuses and coaches and should help to answer some key points that are relevant when considering whether to apply for exemptions or financial support.

This information sheet covers:

- *Determining What Class Your Vehicle Is*
- *Exemptions and Financial Assistance*
 - *Exemptions*
 - *Financial Assistance – Purchasing a Replacement Vehicle*
 - *Financial Assistance – Purchasing a Retrofit*

Determining What Class Your Vehicle Is

- Before you decide whether to apply for an exemption or financial support it's helpful to know what class your vehicle is. This will tell you:
 - Whether you will be charged £10 or £50 if you drive in the CAZ with a **non-compliant** vehicle
 - How much you could be entitled to in grant/loan, if eligible
 - Whether you can apply for specific exemptions that relate to the class of vehicle
- Minibuses typically fall into two categories:
 - **M2** - Vehicles used for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, and having a maximum mass not exceeding 5 tonnes. These vehicles will be **charged £10 per calendar day** for entering the CAZ if non-compliant.
 - **M3** - Vehicles used for the carriage of passengers, comprising more than eight seats in addition to the driver's seat, and having a maximum mass exceeding 5 tonnes. These vehicles will be **charged £50 per calendar day**, if non-compliant.
- Coaches (and buses) are also **M3** category vehicles.
- Vehicle categories are set by national government.
- The national Clean Air Zone Framework, which Councils have to follow and that sets which vehicle types are charged, is based on vehicle category also.
- You can see more about vehicle categories at <https://www.vehicle-certification-agency.gov.uk/vehicle-type-approval/what-is-vehicle-type-approval/type-approval-category-definitions/#topic-title>
- You can confirm the category of your vehicle by entering your registration at: <https://vehicleenquiry.service.gov.uk/VehicleFound?locale=en> and viewing your '**Vehicle Type Approval**'
- The national government vehicle checker for Clean Air Zones nationwide will tell you if your vehicle is non-compliant, and how much the charge will be, at: <https://www.gov.uk/clean-air-zones>

Exemptions and Financial Assistance

- Vehicle owners with non-complaint vehicles can choose to do the following to avoid charges:
 - Apply for financial assistance to support them in upgrading to a cleaner vehicle or purchasing a retrofit, where there is a CVRAS-accredited option for their vehicle.
- or

- Continue to operate under an exemption, where their vehicle qualifies.
- Exemptions and Financial Assistance can be applied for via separate links on the Sheffield Clean Air Zone website: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/campaigns/clean-air-zone-sheffield>

Exemptions

Disabled Tax Class Vehicle

- Most exemptions for the Sheffield CAZ are **set nationally by central government**. Of these, one is potentially relevant to the day-to-day operation of coaches and minibuses. Vehicles that are purchased *specifically* for the purpose of transporting people with disabilities may apply to DVLA to be recognised as a Disabled Tax Class Vehicle, which would then be exempt from CAZ charges.
- This exemption **applies to any category of vehicle**.
- An example of a vehicle that may qualify for this exemption is where a minibus has been purchased by a disability charity specifically for the transport of people with a form of disability.
- Vehicle owners can make written enquiries on this with DVLA Vehicle Enquiries by going to: <https://contact.dvla.gov.uk/caz?locale=en>
- They can telephone on: 0300 790 6802 - Monday to Friday, 8am to 7pm; Saturdays, 8am to 2pm
- The DVLA will make the decision as to whether to agree to change the tax class of your vehicle. The advice is that the vehicle must be used for the benefit/aid of the disabled person, e.g. taking to medical appointments, shopping etc, but this can apply to any type of vehicle.

Wheelchair Accessible Coach/Minibus - Disabled Adapted Coaches

- This is a **locally determined exemption** and must be applied for at: <https://www.sheffield.gov.uk/pollution-nuisance/apply-local-exemption-or-discount-sheffields-clean-air-zone>
- This exemption covers coaches that have been specially adapted to carry disabled passengers, for example, with entry lifts for wheelchairs and/or anchor points for wheelchair user passengers.
- Vehicles should be category M2 or M3
- Evidence is required as follows:
 - V5 Certificate
 - Photos of the front, back and sides of the vehicle(s)
 - Photos of entry lifts for wheelchair or anchor points
 - A valid Accessibility Certificate confirming that the vehicle confirms to Schedule 1 of the Public Service Vehicles Accessibility Regulations (PSVAR) 2000

Education School Trips

- This is a locally determined exemption for coaches and minibuses – both category M2 and M3 vehicles - with a minimum of eight seats, plus the driver.
- The definition of education trips is:
 - A vehicle of Class M2 or M3
 - The trip is exclusively for the purposes of transporting pupils of a school/college to or from a site of education-related activity either within the Clean Air Zone boundary, or where a direct journey requires the vehicle to travel through the Clean Air Zone/inner ring road.

- Educational institutions covered are schools and colleges providing primary education, secondary education or further education to students 18 or under. Universities are not included.
- This exemption must be applied for per trip and in advance of the trip. We will be making changes so that applications can be made up to and including the day of the trip. All evidence required to support the application must be provided at the time of the application.

Financial Assistance – Purchasing a Replacement Vehicle

Coaches

- Coaches, if eligible, can receive grants or loans to a maximum cap of £16,000 per vehicle.
- We strongly recommend purchasing a new vehicle via an approved dealership.
- Coaches owned by companies based within the Sheffield and Rotherham local authority boundaries are eligible at present. Take up of the support will be reviewed and should take-up allow, the scheme may be opened up beyond Sheffield and Rotherham at some point.
- The level of support is based on the Council providing 30% of the remaining difference to be paid for a new vehicle, after the sale price of the old vehicle has been deducted. No more than 30% can be offered, even where this figure would be more than £16,000.
- Evidence required includes proof of sale of the non-compliant vehicle and proof of purchase for the compliant replacement.
- You should apply and await confirmation of eligibility before purchasing a replacement vehicle.
- The finance provider will make payment directly to the seller of the vehicle as part of the finance arrangement that has been agreed.

Minibuses

- Minibuses (M2 Category), if eligible, can receive grants or loans to a maximum cap of £4,500 per vehicle for a compliant diesel vehicle, or £5,000 for an electric vehicle.
- Minibuses (M3 Category), if eligible, can receive grants or loans to a maximum cap of £16,000 for a compliant vehicle.
- Some vehicles may have been modified and should contact the Council at cleanair@sheffield.gov.uk for further information.
- We strongly recommend purchasing a new vehicle via an approved dealership.
- Coaches owned by companies based within the Sheffield and Rotherham local authority boundaries are eligible at present. Take up of the support will be reviewed and should take-up allow, the scheme may be opened up beyond Sheffield and Rotherham at some point.
- The level of support is based on the Council providing 30% of the remaining difference to be paid for a new vehicle, after the sale price of the old vehicle has been deducted. No more than 30% can be offered, even where this figure would be more than £4,500/£5,000 respectively.
- Evidence required includes proof of sale of the non-compliant vehicle and proof of purchase for the compliant replacement.
- You should apply and await confirmation of eligibility before purchasing a replacement vehicle.
- The finance provider will make payment directly to the seller of the vehicle as part of the finance arrangement that has been agreed.

Exemptions Supporting Owners to Purchase a New Vehicle

- Sheffield City Council has designed two exemptions that are designed to support vehicle owners to upgrade their vehicle.
- Firstly, after applying for financial support to purchase a replacement compliant vehicle, once you have received confirmation of eligibility, you be exempt from charges for three months from that point. This is intended to allow you time to find and confirm purchase of a replacement vehicle.
- Secondly, once you have successfully confirmed that an order has been placed for a compliant replacement vehicle, your existing vehicle will be exempt from charges until two weeks after you have received the replacement vehicle. This is intended to allow for longer delivery times for replacement vehicles that owners may face.
- The finance provider will make payment directly to the seller of the vehicle as part of the finance arrangement that has been agreed.

Financial Assistance – Purchasing a Retrofit

Coaches

- Coaches (M3 Category), if eligible, can receive a grant of a maximum of £16,000 towards the cost of a retrofit. The retrofit grant can cover the entire cost of the retrofit up to £16,000. The owner of the vehicle would contribute anything over £16,000.
- Retrofits have to be sourced by the vehicle owner directly and must be CVRAS-accredited.
- A list of CVRAS-accredited providers can be found on the Energy Saving Trust website: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/service/clean-vehicle-retrofit-accreditation-scheme/>
- After the application for a grant has been assessed and approved, the applicant should contact an accredited provider to discuss options and obtain a quote. Grants will be paid retrospectively once the CVRAS accreditation and evidence of the payment has been received.

Minibuses

- M2 Category minibuses, if eligible, can receive a grant of £2,000 towards the cost of a retrofit. The retrofit grant can cover the entire cost of the retrofit up to £2,000. The owner of the vehicle would contribute anything over £2,000.
- M3 Category minibuses, if eligible, can receive a grant of a maximum of £16,000 towards the cost of a retrofit. The retrofit grant can cover the entire cost of the retrofit up to £16,000. The owner of the vehicle would contribute anything over £16,000.
- Some vehicles may have been modified and should contact the Council at cleanair@sheffield.gov.uk for further information.
- Retrofits have to be sourced by the vehicle owner directly and must be CVRAS-accredited.
- A list of CVRAS-accredited providers can be found on the Energy Saving Trust website: <https://energysavingtrust.org.uk/service/clean-vehicle-retrofit-accreditation-scheme/>
- After the application for a retrofit grant has been assessed and approved, the applicant should contact an accredited provider to discuss options and obtain a quote. Grants will be paid retrospectively once the CVRAS accreditation and evidence of the payment has been received.

Exemptions Supporting Owners to Purchase a CVRAS-Accredited Retrofit

- Sheffield City Council has designed an exemption that is designed to support vehicle owners to retrofit their existing vehicle to a compliant standard.
- After applying for financial support to retrofit an existing non-compliant vehicle, once you have received confirmation of eligibility, you be exempt from charges for three months from that point. This is intended to allow you time to find and confirm purchase of a retrofit.

- Secondly, once you have successfully confirmed the retrofit order, your existing vehicle will be exempt from charges until after you have received the replacement vehicle. This is intended to allow for longer delivery times for replacement vehicles that owners may face.