

# Greater Manchester Minimum Licensing Standards

July 2020

## Introduction

Taxis and private hire services are a crucial part of the overall transport mix, and it is vital that they can consistently deliver safe and high-quality services for the public.

The proposed Greater Manchester Minimum Licensing Standards (MLS) will help deliver improved safety, customer focus, higher environmental standards and accessibility.

This approach stands to benefit drivers and the trade more widely, by strengthening public confidence in a well-regulated and locally licensed taxi and private hire sector and will contribute to better air quality and lower carbon emissions.

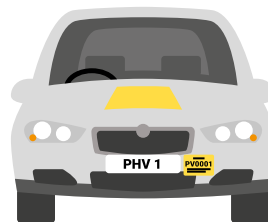
By establishing and implementing Greater Manchester-wide minimum standards, we can help to ensure that all residents and visitors see these services as safe and reliable, and preferable to those not licensed by Greater Manchester local authorities.

This collaborative approach seeks to establish a minimum standard in key areas, whilst allowing local authorities to exceed these where they consider this to be appropriate.

To get this right, an eight-week public consultation exercise is proposed in October 2020 where everyone will be able to submit their views on the MLS proposals, the timescales for implementation and on the GM Clean Air Plan.



Over  
**2000**  
**TAXIS**  
licensed in Greater  
Manchester



Over  
**14,000**  
**PRIVATE HIRE**  
**VEHICLES**  
licensed in Greater  
Manchester



**Greater Manchester  
Licensing Network**

## Minimum Licensing Standards

The MLS has four areas of focus:

- **Drivers:** Common standards on Criminal Records Checks; medical examinations; a local knowledge test; English language proficiency; driver training; driving proficiency; and dress code
- **Vehicles:** Vehicle emissions (diesel Euro 6 and above, petrol Euro 4 and above with an ambition for a zero-emission capable fleet); Vehicle ages (under 5 years at first licensing, no older than 10 years); Vehicle colour (Black for Taxi/Hackney, white for Private Hire Vehicles); Vehicle livery (common GM design with council logo incorporated); Accessibility (all taxis to be wheelchair accessible); Vehicle testing; CCTV; Executive Hire; Vehicle design and licensing requirements.
- **Operators:** Private hire operators/staff will require basic Criminal Record Check; more stringent requirements in relation to booking records; operators to take more responsibility for the behaviour of their drivers.

- **Local Authorities:** Applications may be submitted up to 8 weeks in advance of licence expiry; Once determined, licence issued within 5 working days; Agree to develop common enforcement approach and a framework to which licensing fees are set; councillors not able to hear applications until they have received training

Given the clean air and decarbonisation challenge, highlighted in the July 2020 GMCA Clean Air Plan report, sectors such as transport need to take very significant action now to reduce carbon emissions. For taxis and PHVs to contribute will require them to switch to zero-emission capable (ZEC) vehicles. And to invest in ZEC vehicles, taxi proprietors also require long-term confidence in the local policy landscape, including future interventions and supporting infrastructure.

Therefore, the following dates for ZEC adoption are proposed as part of the MLS consultation:

- From 2025 all new to licence vehicles would need to be ZEC; and
- From 2028 all vehicles would need to be ZEC, meaning an entirely zero emission taxi/ PHV fleet across GM by 2029.



# GM Clean Air Plan

Government has instructed Greater Manchester to introduce a region-wide Clean Air Zone from spring 2022, as part of its Clean Air Plan. Under the plans, higher emission non-compliant taxis and PHVs would pay a daily charge of £7.50 to drive in Greater Manchester.

To support local GM-licensed taxi and private hire owners we are asking Government for a multi-million-pound funding support package to help upgrade to cleaner vehicles or zero-emission vehicles.

The following funding is proposed for owners of PHV licensed in GM, subject to approved government funding:

## GM-licensed Private Hire Wheelchair Accessible Vehicle (WAV) or minibus:

There are two options: a grant of £5,000 for a compliant 6+ seater vehicle OR access to vehicle finance, offering an average subsidy of £5,000, with the subsidy per vehicle capped at £7,000.

## GM-licensed Non-wheelchair accessible Private Hire Vehicles:

There are three options:

- A grant of £1,000 for replacement with a compliant internal combustion engine vehicle OR access to vehicle finance, offering an average subsidy of £1,000, with the subsidy per vehicle capped at £2,000.

- A grant of £2,000 for replacement with a compliant hybrid or plug-in hybrid OR access to vehicle finance, offering an average subsidy of £2,000, with the subsidy per vehicle capped at £3,000.
- A grant of £2,500 towards the running costs of a Zero Emissions Capable vehicle.

## GM-licensed Hackney Carriages

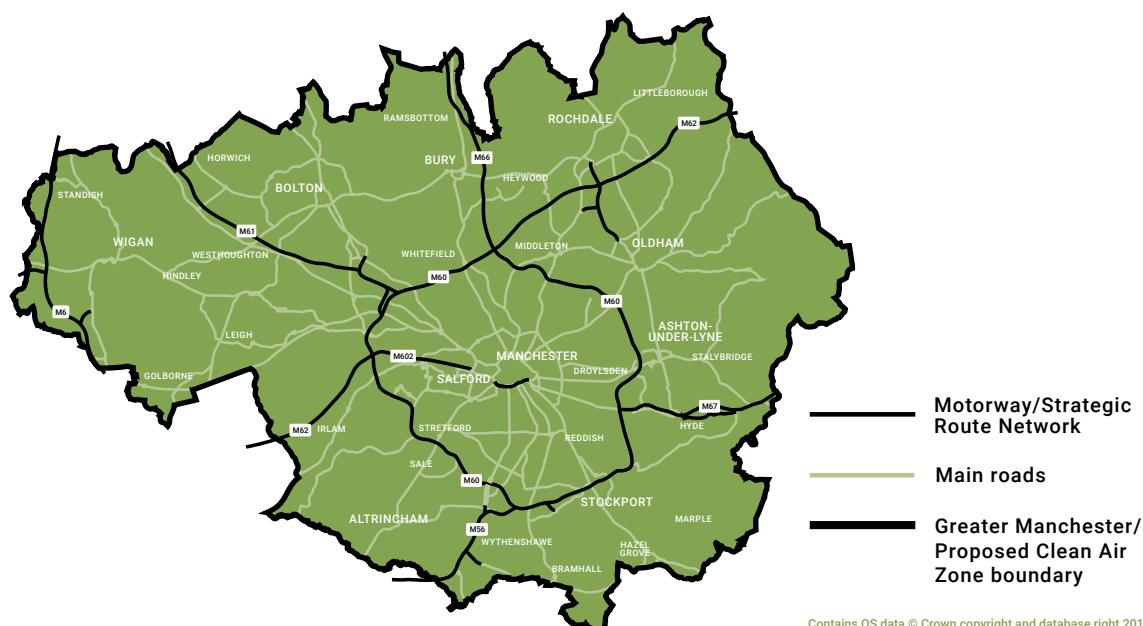
The following funding is proposed for owners of hackney carriages licensed in GM, subject to approved government funding. There are two options:

- A one-off grant of £10,000 towards the running costs of a Zero Emissions Capable Vehicle or access to vehicle finance, offering an average subsidy of £10,000 with the total subsidy capped at £14,000.
- A grant of £5,000 towards the LPG retrofit of a Euro 5 vehicle less than ten years old.

## Temporary Discounts and Exemptions

Wheelchair Accessible (WAV) Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles which are licensed to one of the ten Greater Manchester local authorities, will be eligible for a temporary exemption until 31st December 2022.

We recognise that some owners of PHVs use the vehicle for private, domestic use. As private vehicles are not included in the proposed Clean Air Zone, we are proposing that owner drivers of Greater Manchester-licensed PHVs (and PHVs leased full-time by 1 person), are offered a discounted weekly charge, paying for five out of seven days.



## Additional measures

We want to encourage more hackney carriage drivers to make the move to electric vehicles. So we're proposing a 'Try Before You Buy' initiative for GM-licensed hackney carriage drivers to trial an electric hackney.

We will also be working with the Office for Low Emission Vehicles (OLEV) to secure funding to install around 300 further charging points. We are proposing that 40 of the rapid electric vehicle charging points, would be for use by taxi and PHV. Locations will be tailored to support zero emission capable taxis to operate across GM.

There is also a proposal for a Hardship Fund to support individuals, companies and organisations who are assessed to be most vulnerable to socio-economic impacts from the Clean Air Zone.

All of these proposals are subject to the eight-week public consultation in October 2020.

## Consultation

In October 2020, Greater Manchester is planning to launch an 8-week consultation on the GM Clean Air Plan proposals. As there is significant overlap between GM Clean Air Plan and the proposed emission standards in the GM Minimum Licensing Standards for hackney carriages and private hire vehicles, these two consultations will be run at the same time so that those affected can understand the full impact on them.

Greater Manchester will need to conduct the consultation and any supporting engagement activity in a way that adheres to the government COVID-19 guidance around social distancing, whilst ensuring that residents, businesses and visitors can engage with the consultation materials and respond in a meaningful way.

## Government's new statutory standard for taxis and PHVs

Greater Manchester welcomes Government's publication of national standards – many of which mirror Greater Manchester's proposed common minimum licensing standards.

Our standards will include all of the national standards and go further, as we include vehicle emissions standards and a step-by-step pathway to reducing harmful emissions from taxis and private hire vehicles.

## Find out more

For more information about your licensing standards visit your local authority's website and search for licensing. You can keep up to date on GM minimum licensing standards, at:

**[tfgm.com/taxis-phv/minimum-standards](https://tfgm.com/taxis-phv/minimum-standards)**

For further information on the GM Clean Air Plan and to sign up for future updates, visit:

**[cleanaairgm.com](https://cleanaairgm.com)** or email **[info@cleanaairgm.com](mailto:info@cleanaairgm.com)**



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