

Edinburgh's Low Emission Zone "will create a healthier city"

It is now a year until Edinburgh can begin to enforce the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) which is in place in the city centre.

The LEZ was introduced a year ago although there is a two year grace period before penalty charges are imposed.

NHS Lothian back the council's move to improve the air quality in the city which they say will have a positive impact on health and well-being.

Edinburgh still has some way to go before it meets the [World Health Organisation's targets](#). Reducing air pollution is especially important for those most vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution, including children, older people and those with underlying health conditions.

Overall compliance with the LEZ emissions standards has increased from 48% to 78% in the last six years. Lothian Buses is 100% compliant and Heavy Goods Vehicles are 86% compliant. But more than half of diesel cars and a third of light goods vehicles (including vans) traveling on the main roads into Edinburgh do not comply with the new requirements.



Transport Convener Cllr Scott Arthur PHOTO © The Edinburgh Reporter

Cllr Scott Arthur, Transport and Environment Convener, said: “As Glasgow begins to enforce its LEZ, and with one year to go until our own LEZ comes into force, it’s a chance to reflect on the reasons for introducing an LEZ in Edinburgh.

“Research has shown that air pollution negatively affects everyone’s health and we have a responsibility to address this. In two weeks, we’ll mark Clean Air Day, which this year focuses on the fact that poor air quality not only affects our physical health, but our mental health too.

“By restricting the most polluting vehicles in the city centre the LEZ will create a healthier, more welcoming place to be – and we’re expecting benefits to spread across the wider city.

“I’m encouraged by the fact that compliance with our emissions standards continues to increase, and I’d like to thank people making the switch to cleaner modes of transport. However, there’s still work to be done, and over the next year we’ll be

supporting even more people to consider greener, more sustainable ways to travel. I want to use the extra year Edinburgh has to get ready for this change, and ensure residents and businesses are fully prepared.”

Dona Milne, Director of Public Health, NHS Lothian, said: “The links between transport and health are clear and the LEZ will help to improve health and wellbeing and reduce inequalities for the people of Edinburgh.

“Tackling air quality, alongside commitments in the City Mobility Plan and associated draft Action Plans, will have multiple benefits. Health and wellbeing will be improved as a result of reduced levels of air and noise pollution; improved road safety; more inclusive opportunities for people to travel by walking, wheeling, cycling and public transport; and the increased vibrancy of local communities and economies.”

Clean Air Day takes place on 15 June 2023.