

Date: 4 September 2024

Item: London-wide Ultra Low Emission Zone - Six Months Report

This paper will be considered in public

1 Summary

1.1 This paper summarises the key findings from the recently published London-wide Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) six months monitoring report.

2 Recommendation

2.1 **The Panel is asked to note the paper.**

3 Background

3.1 The ULEZ expanded London-wide on 29 August 2023. The London-wide zone measures 1,500 km² and covers nine million people, making it the largest zone of its kind in the world. The expansion of the ULEZ to outer London means that an additional 1,752 schools and other educational establishments, with around 880,000 attendees, are now included in the zone, with these students all breathing cleaner air as a result. An additional 501 health institutions are also now included in the zone bringing health benefits to all those who use the services these institutions provide.¹

3.2 In 2019, toxic air contributed to around 4,000 premature deaths in London. The greatest number of deaths attributable to air pollution were in outer London boroughs, mainly due to the higher proportion of elderly people in these areas, who are more vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution.² Over 480,000 Londoners have been diagnosed with asthma and are more vulnerable to the impacts of air pollution, with more than half of these people living in outer London.³ Asthma prevalence in London is highest in outer London, with approximately 4.9 per cent of the population in outer London boroughs diagnosed with asthma, compared to approximately 4.4 per cent in inner London boroughs.⁴

¹ Air Quality Factsheet (2024). Available at: Schools, Hospitals and Care Homes in the ULEZ Expansion Area

² <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-and-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/environment-publications/health-burden-air-pollution-london>

³ NHS England Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) data, published in the Public Health Outcomes Framework reports the number of patients aged 6 years plus included on a GP register of patients with asthma, by borough, in 2022/23.

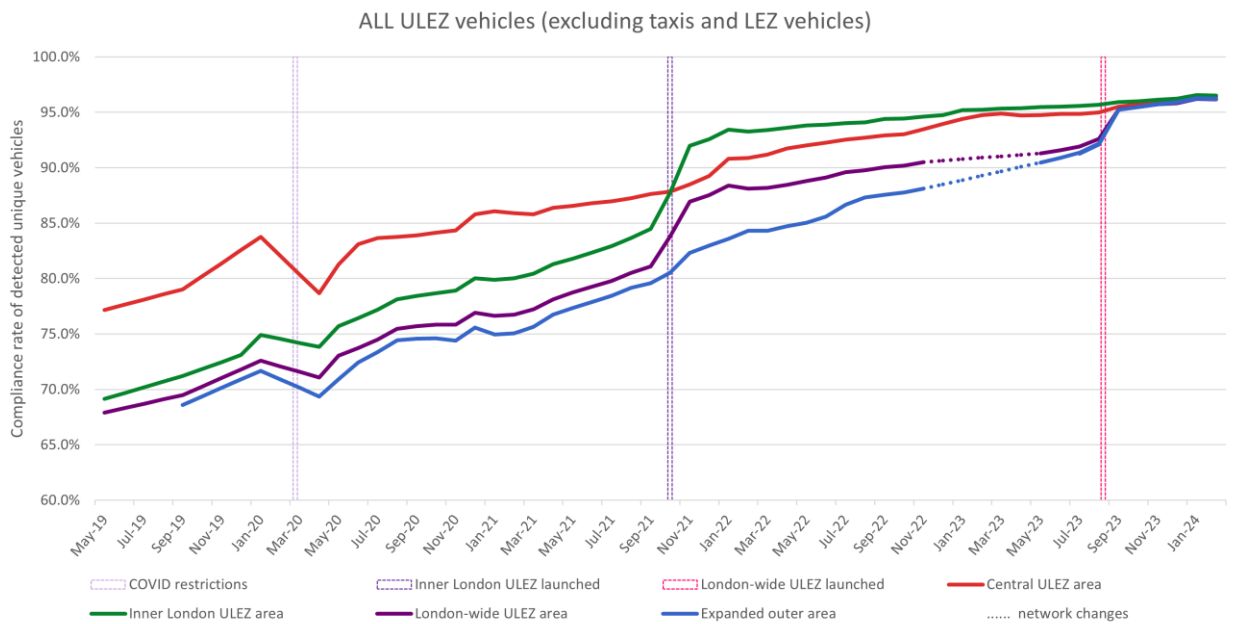
⁴ NHS England Quality and Outcomes Framework (QOF) data, published in the Public Health Outcomes Framework reports the percentage of patients aged 6 years plus included on a GP register of patients with asthma,

- 3.3 On 31 October 2023, the First Month Report was published and included detailed vehicle compliance data.
- 3.4 On 25 July 2024, the Six Month Report was published, which included data up to the end of February 2024. The report included an update on compliance along with preliminary analysis of the impact of the scheme and the London-wide expansion on air pollutant emissions and concentrations. The full report can be found here: <https://www.london.gov.uk/programmes-strategies/environment-and-climate-change/environment-and-climate-change-publications/london-wide-ulez-six-month-report>.
- 3.5 Fuller analysis of both emissions and concentrations will be reported in the One Year Report, which will be supported by an advisory group of external experts.
- 3.6 As with previous ULEZ impact monitoring reports, data on uptake of the Scrappage Scheme is not included in the Six Month Report. This is because we report uptake separately through regular factsheets. The latest factsheet, with data up to 4 August 2024, shows that we have approved around 54,000 applications to the scheme and committed nearly £186m in funding (with over 330 vehicles approved for donation to Ukraine). Of these 54,000 applications, over 36,000 have been accepted for the car and motorcycle scheme and nearly 18,000 for the van and minibus scheme. A full evaluation of the impact of the Scrappage Scheme will take place after the scheme has closed.

4 Key findings

Compliance

- 4.1 A larger proportion of vehicles seen driving in London are cleaner. Compliance of vehicles subject to the ULEZ is 96.2 per cent London-wide. This is up from 91.6 per cent in June 2023 and 39 per cent in February 2017, when changes associated with the ULEZ began.
- 4.2 Compliance has increased for both cars (97.1 per cent) and vans (88.9 per cent).
- 4.3 In outer London, 97.1 per cent of cars now meet the ULEZ standards. Van compliance increased by 9.5 percentage points since June 2023, to 89 per cent in February 2024. This has effectively closed the gap between outer London and the rest of London, meaning the benefits of high compliance levels now extend to the whole city, as can be seen below.



4.4 On an average day, there were 90,000 fewer non-compliant vehicles seen in the zone in February 2024 than in June 2023. This is a 53 per cent reduction.

Traffic

4.5 The ULEZ was not designed as a congestion management tool but the way it operates means it does influence travel behaviour and traffic, as has been shown in previous ULEZ monitoring reports.

4.6 Preliminary analysis of traffic flows indicates there are no notable changes in overall traffic in central/inner/outer London. There are seasonal variations within this, with lower traffic during summer and Christmas holidays, and higher traffic outside of these periods.

4.7 This will be analysed further in the One Year Report.

Emissions

4.8 NOx emissions from cars in outer London in 2023 are 13 per cent lower than would have been expected without the London-wide ULEZ expansion (against an estimated 10 per cent in consultation). NOx emissions from vans in outer London in 2023 are seven per cent lower (against an estimated seven per cent in consultation).

4.9 NOx from cars and vans in outer London in 2023 is 424 tonnes lower (against an estimated 323 tonnes in consultation) than would have been expected without the London-wide ULEZ expansion. This is a reduction of 11 per cent.

4.10 PM2.5 exhaust emissions from cars in outer London in 2023 are 22 per cent lower (against an estimated 16 per cent in consultation) than would have been expected without the London-wide ULEZ expansion.

4.11 Emissions estimates are based on the most up to date monitoring of vehicle fleet and traffic information when compared to a scenario without the London-wide ULEZ.

Concentrations

4.12 Impacts of the London-wide ULEZ have been estimated using a similar method to previous reports using control zones in outer London and a zone around London.

4.13 In the first six months of operation, roadside NO₂ concentrations were on average up to 4.4 per cent lower than without the London-wide ULEZ expansion.

4.14 Overall, the full suite of ULEZ policies (all phases plus LEZ) have improved air quality. Roadside NO₂ concentrations are estimated to be:

(a) 53 per cent lower in central London (compared to without the ULEZ policies);

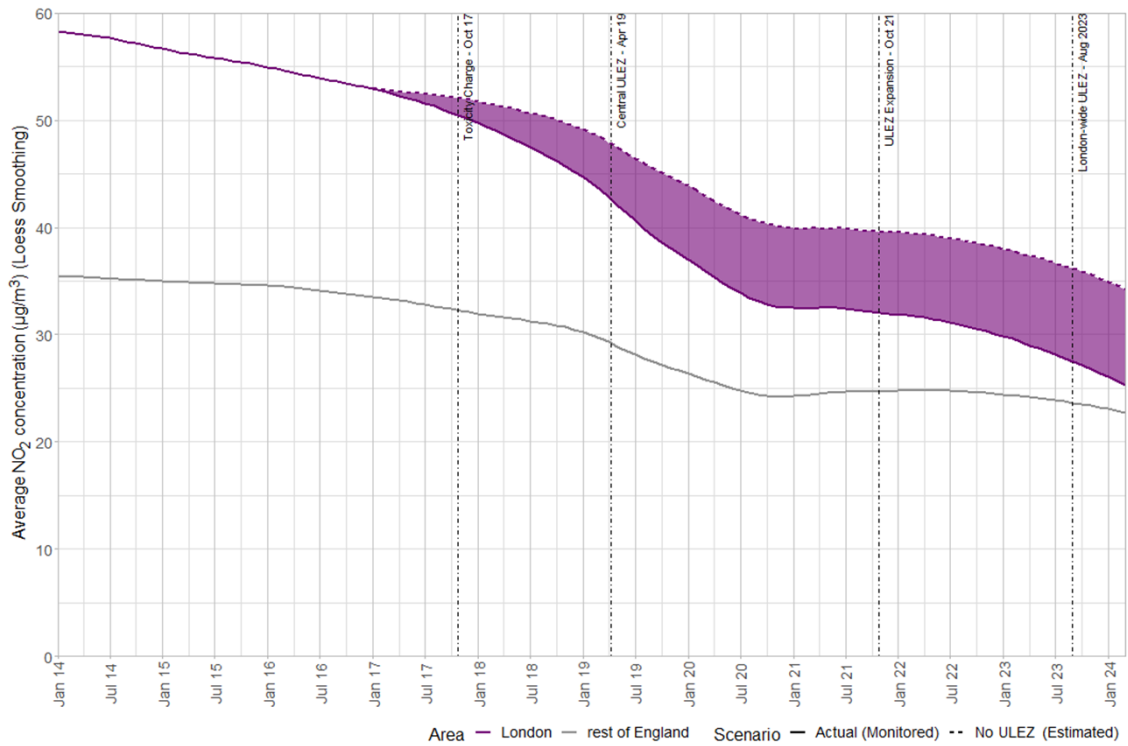
(b) 24 per cent lower in inner London (compared to without the ULEZ policies);
and

(c) 21 per cent lower in outer London (compared to without the ULEZ policies).

4.15 Areas outside London are also seeing the impacts, with roadside NO₂ concentrations within five kilometres from the Greater London boundary on average nine per cent lower than without the ULEZ policies in place.

4.16 The analysis of trends of average London concentrations (the whole of London) indicates that the ULEZ has reduced roadside NO₂ concentrations by 23 per cent (equivalent to 8 µg/m³) compared to what they would have been without the ULEZ.

4.17 When compared to trends of monitored data for the rest of England, roadside concentrations in London are declining at a faster rate and therefore are closing the gap between London and the rest of England (as shown by the grey and purple solid lines in the figure below).



List of Appendices

None

List of Background Papers:

[London-wide Ultra Low Emission Zone – Six Month Report](#)

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