

# LOW EMISSION ZONES IN SCOTLAND

## CTA BRIEFING



### 1. INTRODUCTION

[Low Emission Zones](#) are being established in Scotland in Aberdeen, Dundee, Edinburgh and Glasgow by Transport Scotland together with the respective local authorities in each city.

This briefing for CTA members in Scotland contains information and advice on the LEZs, including:

- Why and where they are being introduced;
- How they will operate and be enforced;
- Which exemptions will apply and how they can be secured;
- What financial support is available for Community Transport operators to adapt and comply; and,
- Where to find further information, advice and support.

### 2. BACKGROUND & CONTEXT

In 2019, the Scottish Parliament passed [landmark legislation](#) with a new legal target to end Scotland's contribution to climate change and achieve [net zero carbon emissions by 2045](#).

In order to achieve net zero, it will be necessary to invest in the transition to zero-emissions vehicles and take measures to reduce car use and encourage modal shift towards public transport, community transport and walking, wheeling and cycling.

Transport is Scotland's biggest contributor to climate change, emitting over 25% of all of our greenhouse gas emissions. Cars are responsible for the largest share of these emissions or 38%. The Scottish Government is committed to [reducing car use by 20% by 2030](#).

Four new Low Emission Zones (LEZs), which set environmental limits on certain city roads and restrict access for the most polluting vehicles, are being implemented in Scotland. Across Europe, LEZs have successfully improved local air quality, reduced car use and reduced carbon emissions as part of efforts to create more accessible, attractive and liveable city centres with better public health and lower levels of traffic.

### 3. LOCATIONS AND TIMELINES

#### Where are the Low Emission Zones?

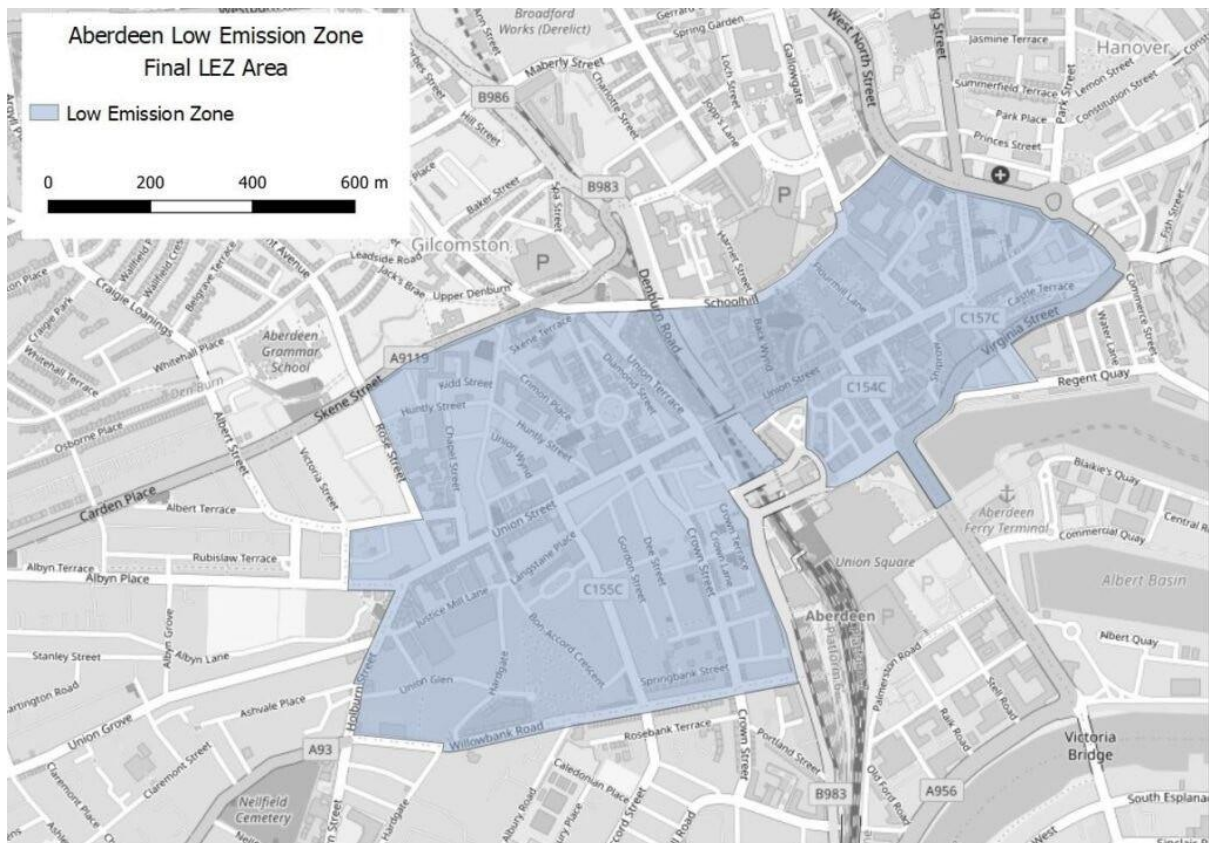
There will be four LEZs in Scotland's biggest cities:

- **Glasgow:** The LEZ already applies to the city's bus fleet, but enforcement for all other vehicles will begin on 1 June 2023
- **Dundee:** Enforcement will begin on 30 May 2024

- **Aberdeen:** Enforcement will begin on 1 June 2024
- **Edinburgh:** Enforcement will begin on 1 June 2024

## Aberdeen

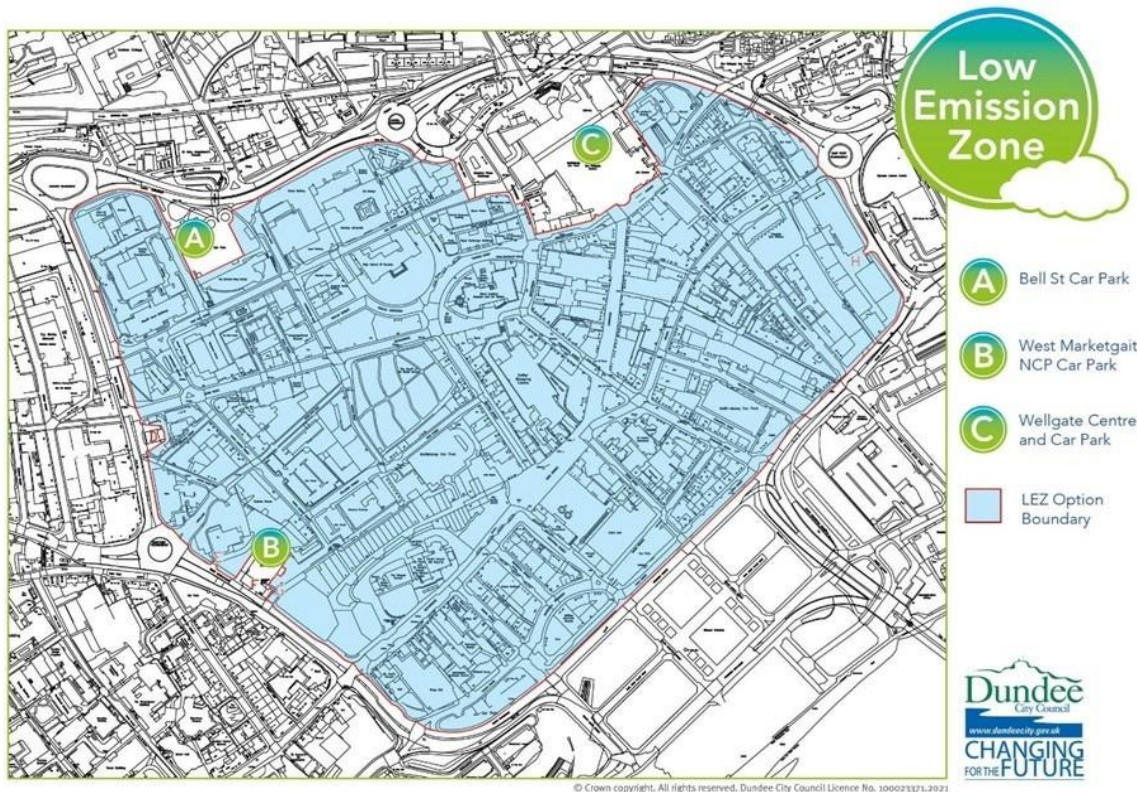
[The LEZ in Aberdeen](#) covers a small, central plot around Castlegate to the East, and the Union Street area to the West (between Skene St and Willowbank Road). The train and bus stations are both outwith the bounds of the LEZ. The two-year grace period in Aberdeen ends on the last day of May in 2024, with enforcement of fines starting on 1st June.



Aberdeen's LEZ Map. Source: <https://www.lowemissionzones.scot/local-zones/aberdeen>

## Dundee

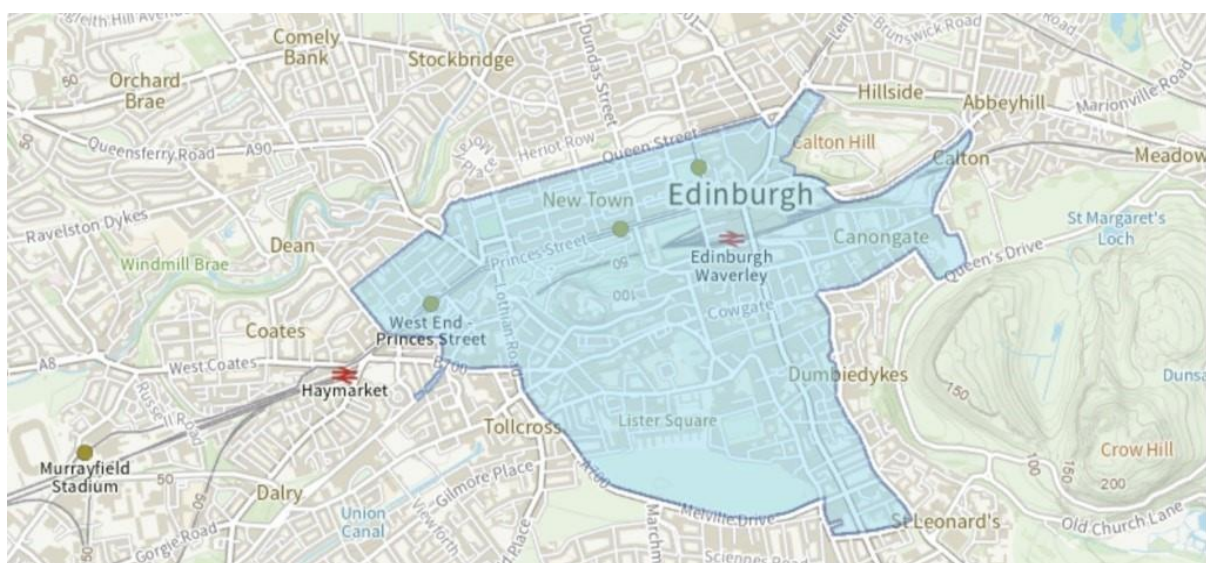
[Dundee's LEZ](#) covers the very centre of the city on the north side of the Tay. It's held within the A991 ring road and does not include the car parks at Bell Street, Wellgate Centre, or West Marketgait NCP. Dundee will start enforcing LEZ fines from 30th May 2024, having allowed a two-year grace period.



Dundee LEZ Map. Source: <https://www.lowemissionzones.scot/local-zones/dundee>

## Edinburgh

Edinburgh's LEZ covers the very centre of the city, from New Town down to Melville Drive and St Leonard's Street. Enforcement of the fines for non-compliance starts on the 1st June 2024, and until then the capital has plenty of schemes to promote walking, cycling, and public transport as alternatives to driving in the city centre.

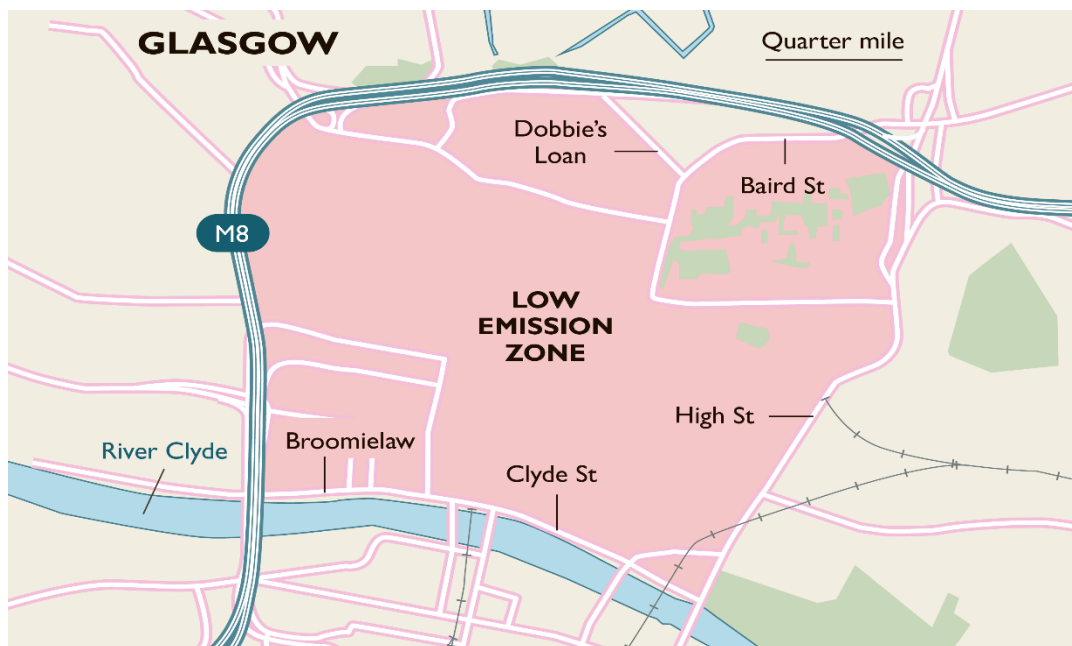


Edinburgh LEZ Map. Source: <https://www.lowemissionzones.scot/local-zones/edinburgh>

## Glasgow

[Glasgow's LEZ](#) is a square shape created by the M8 with the River Clyde and the High Street and Saltmarket.

Glasgow has operated a bus-only LEZ since 2018, in efforts to reduce air pollution. Scotland's largest city will start enforcing the LEZ penalties from 1st June 2023 for non-compliant vehicles, except from local residents in the zone. People living in Glasgow will still have a grace period until 1st June 2024 to change their vehicle to a compliant model, or switch to other forms of transport.



[Glasgow's Low Emission Zone - LEZ \(arcgis.com\)](#) offers an interactive map

## 4. RULES, OPERATIONS & SYSTEMS

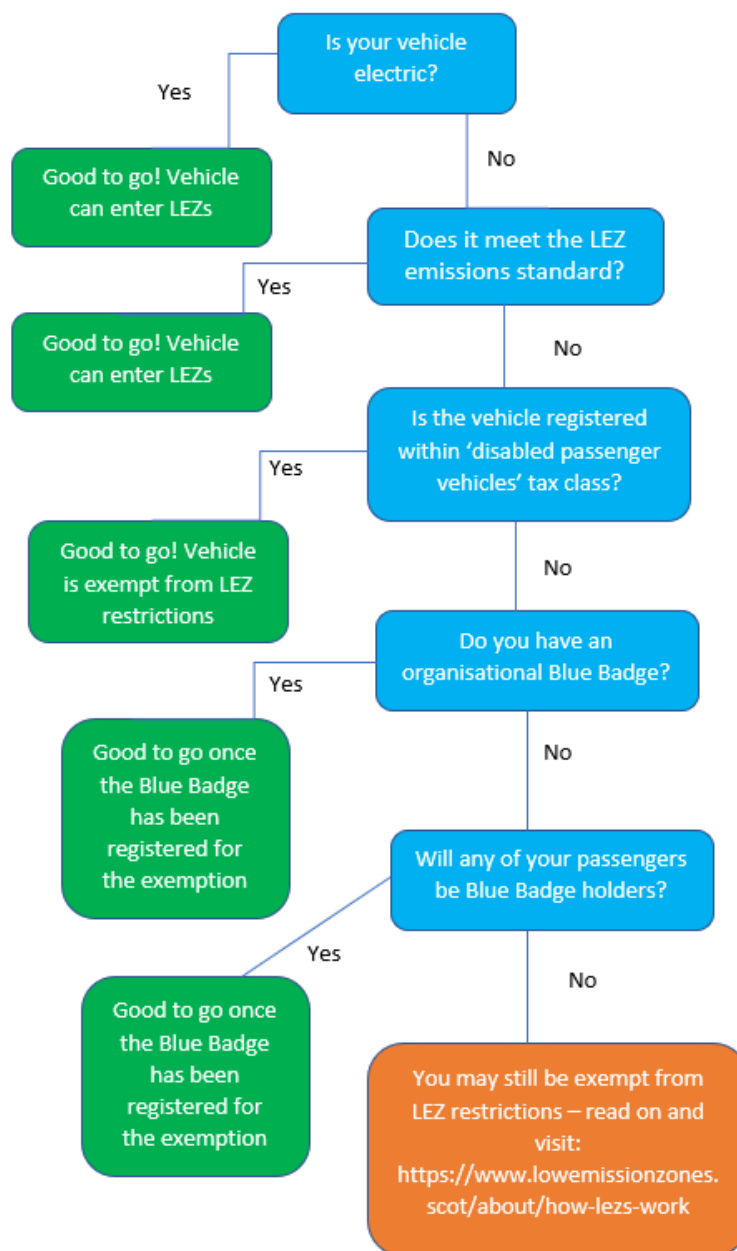
Once Low Emission Zones are active, vehicles that do not meet the [emission standard](#) set for LEZs will not be able to drive within the zone. LEZs will be active 24 hours a day, all year round, and Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) cameras will monitor any vehicles entering the LEZs. These cameras will be linked to local and national vehicle licensing databases, and will be able to detect non-compliant vehicles. They will also be able to recognise vehicles entering the LEZ which have exemptions allowing them to do so.

If a non-compliant vehicle enters the LEZ, a penalty charge will be payable by the vehicle's registered keeper. The minimum charge for non-compliant vehicles driving within a LEZ is £60, this penalty then doubles with each subsequent breach detected in the same LEZ. Penalty charges are capped at **£480 for cars and light goods vehicles**, while the **cap for minibuses, buses, coaches and HGVs is £960**. These penalty notices will be issued and enforced by the relevant local authority directly to the vehicle's registered keeper.

To find out if your vehicle meets the emission standard, visit the LEZ website here: <https://www.lowemissionzones.scot/vehicle-registration-checker>. Generally, diesel engine vehicles registered after September 2015, and petrol vehicles registered from 2006 onwards will meet the required LEZ standards.

### So, what do Community Transport operators need to know?

While our understanding is that vehicles operating for Community Transport purposes will be exempt from LEZ restrictions, it is worth keeping in mind this might not always be the case, and to be cautious when organising services and trips which involve bringing vehicles into a LEZ. Take a look at this flowchart which might help you decide if you need to take any action before taking a vehicle into a LEZ.



## 5. EXEMPTIONS

LEZ regulations will apply to most drivers looking to bring their vehicles into the LEZs. However, there are a few exemptions which allow certain vehicles to enter the LEZs without receiving a penalty. A few of the exemptions most relevant to Community Transport operators are:

### Vehicles for disabled passengers

Where vehicles are being used to transport disabled passengers, there is a likelihood that they will be registered within a 'disabled' or 'disabled passenger vehicle' tax class, or the vehicle may receive a reduction in annual vehicle excise duty because it is being used by a disabled person in receipt of the standard rate Personal Independence Payment. If any of these apply, the vehicle will be exempt from the LEZ restrictions.

You can download our Disabled Driver Road Tax Exemption briefing [here](#).

### Blue Badges

Blue Badge holders are exempt from LEZ restrictions, and this applies to organisational Blue Badges as well as personal Blue Badges.

While vehicles included in the disabled or disabled passenger tax class exemption will automatically be detected by the ANPR cameras, Blue Badge holders will need to apply for either a one-day or long-term exemption to grant them access to LEZs. Register your Blue Badge to qualify for the LEZ exemption [here](#). For more information on registering your Blue Badge, visit the LEZ website [here](#).

For example, a Community Transport group is looking to drive a minibus into Glasgow's LEZ for a daytrip, but their vehicle does not meet the LEZ emissions standard, and they also aren't included in the disabled passenger vehicle class of tax. While they don't hold their own Blue Badge, one of their passengers who will be taking the trip does, and is happy for the CTO to make use of this as it will allow them to make use of disabled parking spaces and get closer to their destination. Before the day of the trip, the CTO registers the Blue Badge [online](#) to receive their one-day exemption, and is able to complete their day-trip without receiving a penalty notice for entering the LEZ.

## 6. FINANCIAL SUPPORT

### Disposal Grants

The Low Emission Zone Support Fund launched in 2021 and so far over £8 million in funding has been allocated as grants to residents and small businesses who are within 20km of a LEZ and can't otherwise afford to upgrade or retrofit their vehicles.

[Households](#) can make use of a £3,000 scrappage grant (allocated as £2,000 for scrapping a non-compliant vehicle at an authorised facility, and up to £1,000 towards travel options e.g.

bikes or public transport tickets). This grant is available for one vehicle per adult/household receiving means-tested benefits from the government, and can't be used to scrap SORN (Statutory Off Road Notification) registered vehicles.

As for **micro businesses**, they are eligible for £2,000 in funding, for scrappage of a non-compliant, non-SORN vehicle, purchased before 17th September 2020, and used for business operation. Sole traders and micro businesses (fewer than nine full-time employees) within 20km of the LEZ can apply. They can also get a grant of up to £1,000 from the Travel Better Fund for a cargo bike or ecargo bike.

To find out more about the cash grants for disposal of vehicles please follow the link to the Energy Saving Trust webpage below, or call Home Energy Scotland on: 0808 808 2282 (for domestic vehicles), or fill out the enquiry [form](#) (for business vehicles). Energy Saving Trust can also be contacted at [LEZfund@est.org.uk](mailto:LEZfund@est.org.uk).

## **7. FURTHER INFORMATION**

If you're concerned about LEZs, or have further questions about what you might need to do to adapt or comply, please get in touch with Team Scotland via [scotland@ctauk.org](mailto:scotland@ctauk.org).

Low Emission Zones Scotland:

[www.lowemissionzones.scot](http://www.lowemissionzones.scot)

CTA's Climate Action programme:

[www.ctauk.org/climateaction](http://www.ctauk.org/climateaction)