



# **Ending the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans**

Transport for the South East response to  
Department for Transport consultation

July 2020

Transport for the South East (TfSE) is a sub-national transport body, which represents sixteen local transport authorities. These are Brighton and Hove, East Sussex, Hampshire, Kent, Medway, Surrey, West Sussex, the Isle of Wight, Portsmouth and Southampton, and the six Berkshire unitary authorities. These bodies are represented on the Shadow Partnership Board along with representatives from the five local enterprise partnerships, district and borough council and the protected landscapes in the TfSE area.

The South East is crucial to the UK economy and is the nation's major international gateway for people and business. High-quality transport infrastructure is critical to making the South East more competitive, contributing to national prosperity and improving the lives of our residents. TfSE aims to provide a single voice on the transport interventions needed to support sustainable economic growth across its geography.

Our transport strategy sets out a 2050 vision for the South East of England to become a leading global region for net-zero carbon and sustainable economic growth where integrated transport, digital and energy networks have delivered a step-change in connectivity and environmental quality. This vision embraces the Government's target of achieving net zero carbon emissions by 2050.

Critical to achieving this will be the need to drastically reduce the emissions from the transport sector through a transition to zero emissions vehicles. This will also need to be accompanied by measures to reduce the need to travel and encourage modal shift to zero emissions forms of transport, including walking and cycling.

TfSE supports the principle of the Government stipulating an end date by which the sale of petrol, diesel hybrid cars and vans should cease. However, TfSE believes that at the same time the Government must set out the mechanisms that will be employed to achieve this outcome in a targeted action plan. This action plan will be necessary to ensure that the target date that is set is both realistic and achievable.

Given the scale of the challenge and the need to involve a number of different partners from government, industry and consumer groups, the Government should consider setting up a task force to oversee the development and implementation of an action plan that will be needed to end the sale of new petrol, diesel and hybrid cars and vans by 2035 or earlier.



**“One voice for our region’s  
transport investment priorities”**

The Government has already set out the steps towards cleaner road transport in its 2018 ‘Road to Zero’ strategy. This strategy outlined a number of the measures that would need to be employed to deliver zero-emissions transport. A number of these measures will need to be coalesced into a costed action plan setting out how the trajectory to the identified end date is to be achieved and the roles and responsibilities of the different partners that will need to be involved.

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The consultation seeks views on the measures that will need to be implemented by government and others to achieve the required end date. In TfSE’s view these measures should include:

- Fiscal incentives such as the existing grant schemes for plug in cars and vans, changes to vehicle excise duty to encourage drivers to make cleaner choices when buying new vehicles, and significant research and development grants to assist the car industry in its shift to the production of zero emissions vehicles.
- Measures to boost the charging infrastructure available to electric car users and further funding to boost research into the establishment of a hydrogen distribution network.
- Effective consumer advice on fuel and technology choices through the continuation of the work of the Road Transport Emissions Advice Group which brings together government, industry, motoring organisations and other key stakeholders to facilitate consistent messaging.
- Government taking the lead by ensuring that the car and van fleet of both central and local government will be zero emissions well before the proposed end date to help drive demand;
- Ensuring that the UK energy sector will be able to cope with future demand by continuing the work of the Electric Vehicle Energy Taskforce, which brings together the energy and automotive sectors to ensure the electricity system is not a blocker to rapid electric vehicle take-up and continue the research into smart charging to lessen the potential burden of electric vehicles on the national grid.
- Ensuring the planning system supports the provision of electric charging points in new housing development, new streetlight and off-street parking facilities.

## Overcoming barriers

The Government must work to ensure that all drivers are able to access the benefits of zero emissions vehicles. The higher upfront costs of these vehicles make them unaffordable to those on lower incomes who are unable to benefit from their lower running costs. The introduction of financing options and the development of a second-hand market with support for battery refit costs and warranty guarantees would provide mechanisms for overcoming some of the barriers to ownership. Without these incentives those from lower income households could be disproportionately burdened by the fuel, maintenance and repair costs of owning older conventional vehicles.

Whilst cars and vans are the focus of the current consultation, it is critically important that the Government continues to move forward with measures to secure the transition to zero emission HGVs and buses, as set out in the 2018 ‘Road to Zero’ strategy. This will be vital to ensure that the target of achieving net zero emissions from transport by 2050, at the latest, can be met.

In conclusion, bringing an end to the sale of petrol diesel and hybrid cars and vans will be a critical point on our journey to a zero emissions future. However, it is vital that any target date is accompanied by an action plan setting out how we are going to go about reaching this important milestone as without it there is a significant risk that the target could be missed.



Transport for the South East  
County Hall  
St. Anne's Crescent  
Lewes  
BN7 1UE

Email            [tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk](mailto:tfse@eastsussex.gov.uk)  
Web            [transportforthesoutheast.org.uk](http://transportforthesoutheast.org.uk)  
Tel            0300 330 9474

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