

What we've learnt

Supporting businesses and the public sector in Nottingham City to understand, trial and implement low emission vehicle technology



Workplace Travel Service

ULEV Experience

Let's Keep
Nottingham
MOVING



**Nottingham
City Council**



The Workplace Travel Service: ULEV Experience Programme

The Workplace Travel Service and ULEV Experience has been a business and public sector support programme dedicated to helping Nottingham-based organisations to understand, trial and implement ultra-low emission vehicles (ULEVs), and has been supported by Nottingham City Council's Go Ultra Low City funding. The programme has been delivered by a consortium led by Cenex, with partners from DriveElectric, Energy Saving Trust, RideWise, CleanTech Business and Automotive Comms.



Improving local air quality

The driving force behind this initiative was to improve local air quality within Nottingham through increasing the uptake of ultra-low emission vehicles. In combination with this business support programme Nottingham City Council provided a grant pot of £600,000 to enable 60 businesses to access a grant of up to £25,000 for the installation of sustainable travel initiatives. Such initiatives could include:

- > Electric vehicle charging points
- > Car parking infrastructure
- > Car club or car sharing initiatives
- > Cycle infrastructure

The programme

The ULEV Experience programme ran from April 2018 to March 2020 and offered businesses and the public sector within Nottingham City access to fully funded:

FLEET REVIEWS, delivered by Genex and the Energy Saving Trust, providing an independent assessment of the potential to integrate ultra-low emission cars and vans within a company fleet.



ULEV LOANS, delivered by DriveElectric, with a range of different vehicle makes and models available for businesses to trial for up to one month.



BUSINESS ENGAGEMENT AND EVENTS, delivered by CleanTech Business and RideWise, enabling businesses to network with peers and gain additional understanding of ULEVs.



This document summarises what the ULEV Experience programme has achieved, and the lessons learnt, with the aim of other cities around the UK being able to benefit from this knowledge and implement their own solutions to address air quality challenges.

Events



What Events were run?

The ULEV Experience has run a series of business engagement events including:

- **CLINICS**, where specific topics were presented in a workshop environment to enable knowledge sharing
- **RIDE AND DRIVES**, where delegates were informed of the benefits of electric vehicles and encouraged to undertake a test drive
- **EV ROADSHOWS**, where business park tenants were invited to learn more about electric vehicles and test drive one where appropriate
- **EVENING BUSINESS NETWORKING RECEPTION**, where businesses who were interested in using low emission vehicles could listen to an 'Electric Vehicle Question Time' panel discussion and network with those that had begun to transition their fleets towards electric vehicles
- **BUSINESS AND PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT EVENTS**, where business drivers and the general public could find out more about the potential benefits of electric vehicles.

The above events were targeted at key audiences including fleet managers, hackney taxi drivers, business owners, finance managers, housing developers and architects, retailers and hoteliers. Topics covered within the clinics included:

- **Installing charge points at business premises**
- **The financial case for switching to electric vehicles**
- **Ultra-low emission vans, trucks and lorries**
- **The commercial case for installing charge points at retail, leisure and hotel developments**
- **Ultra-low emission car clubs.**

How many Events were run?

A total of 23 events were delivered by the ULEV Experience during the two-year programme. These were split across the following events:

Event Type	Number Held
Clinics	10
Ride & Drive	5
EV Roadshow	4
Evening Reception	1
Business & Public Engagement	3

Overall, the 23 events were attended by a total of 619 delegates.

Outcomes

The main aim of the event programme was to inform and educate local businesses on the environmental and economic benefits of ULEVs as well as providing insight into specific technical topics. The events also created a pipeline of businesses who were engaged with the ULEV Experience who then progressed to take up a Fleet Review or ULEV Loan, apply for grant funding to install charge points at their premises and/or subsequently place orders for electric vehicles.

619
Delegates

23
Events



What have we learnt from Events?

Different businesses are at different stages of their ULEV implementation journey. Some have no knowledge about EVs while others are already operating a low emission fleet. Events need to be designed to offer something of interest to everyone.

Many of the EV Roadshows were well attended but with relatively few delegates taking up the opportunity to test drive a vehicle. Many of the models available to test had been on the market for some time, therefore a wider selection of recently launched vehicles may stimulate more interest in test drives.

The four EV Roadshows, run at various business parks in Nottingham, proved to be the most successful format for engaging new businesses with the programme.

Businesses want to hear from other businesses – a range of local business case studies and speakers needs to be an integral part of an events programme.

Attendance at the events built progressively as the ULEV Experience programme started to generate momentum with the last few events being over-subscribed.

One issue encountered was a nervousness amongst some drivers regarding driving an EV; a fear of the unknown based on never having driven an EV combined with negative perceptions based on EV myths. This was tackled by developing an online course – ‘Driving an Electric Vehicle – A Beginner’s Guide’.

Fleet Reviews



What is a Fleet Review?

The Fleet Reviews provided an assessment of the operational and economic suitability of low and ultra-low emission vehicles within company fleets. The report detailed the potential cost and emissions savings associated with their deployment.

The Fleet Reviews were delivered through a five-step process which included the following activities:

- 1 SUMMARY OF EXISTING FLEET**, where the fleet was categorised into relevant vehicle segments and baselined to show fleet size, operational patterns, age profile and environmental performance.
- 2 ULTRA-LOW EMISSION TECHNOLOGY SCREENING**, where a high-level assessment of available ULEV technologies was undertaken to highlight those which have the potential to deliver emission improvements whilst being economically viable.
- 3 VEHICLE PERFORMANCE REVIEWS**, where the operational suitability, total cost of ownership and emissions of the highlighted ULEV technologies were assessed.
- 4 INDIVIDUAL VEHICLE SELECTION**, where the ULEV technology that offered the largest environmental benefits at an acceptable total cost of ownership was identified, on a per vehicle basis.
- 5 SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS/NEXT STEPS**, where the recommended next steps were provided, including implementation advice where appropriate.

How many Fleet Reviews were delivered?

A total of 34 Fleet Reviews were delivered by the ULEV Experience during the two-year programme.

In addition, five Employee Home Charging Reviews were completed.

The aim of these reviews was to identify the possible options available to enable company drivers to charge fleet vehicles at home, thus reducing the need for the installation and use of depot-based and public charging infrastructure. The review aimed to provide organisations with an understanding of current best practice; lessons learnt; infrastructure requirements; billing mechanisms and potential operational restrictions.

Outcomes

The main aim of the Fleet Reviews was to provide specific, tailored advice to local businesses wanting to make the transition to ULEVs. Over the course of the two-year programme the Fleet Reviews identified a number of vehicles that could be transitioned to electric or plug-in hybrid, with associated emission and ownership cost savings calculated. The full savings identified through the Fleet Reviews are outlined in the table below.

Vehicle Type	Vehicles Reviewed	Identified Replacement ULEVs	Potential Annual Savings	
			Carbon Emissions (tonnes)	Total Cost of Ownership
Cars	1,363	396		
Small Vans	1,661	261		
Large Vans	1,361	16	1,008	£269,491
Total	4,385	673		

The results of the Fleet Reviews indicate that of the vehicles assessed, approximately 30% of cars could be replaced with ULEVs, with 16% of small vans identified as appropriate for ULEV replacements. For some organisations the potential ULEV replacements were over 80% of vehicles, while others it was less than 5%.

Some of the issues faced by the programme included the mix of vehicles being assessed, with approximately 31% of vehicles being large vans, which currently have very limited ULEV availability.

34
Fleet
Reviews

5
Employee
Home Charging
Reviews



What have we learnt from Fleet Reviews?

Some businesses had no knowledge about EVs while others were already operating a low emission fleet. The reviews on offer were tailored depending on their stage in the ULEV implementation journey.

It took longer than anticipated to obtain the buy-in from many of the recipient companies to undertake their Fleet Review. Being fully funded, there was a perception of a lack of quality that required additional engagement to overcome.

The delivery of a Fleet Review required the recipient company to provide specific vehicle information (e.g. vehicle details, annual mileage, ownership period, etc.). Many organisations were unable to supply such specific information; tailoring the support to the information they have is key.

The transition to ULEVs within company fleets remains a potentially difficult decision for many organisations and ongoing support and independent advice is required to assist their decision making.

It is important to build in additional, ongoing support for those organisations receiving a Fleet Review to enable them to action the savings identified.

ULEV Loans



What is a ULEV Loan?

To enable organisations to experience Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEVs) before making a purchase decision, the ULEV Loans offered up to nine different vehicle makes and models for organisations to trial for up to one month. Extended ULEV Loans were not available through dealerships or manufacturers, therefore the 'try before you buy' ULEV Loans provided by the ULEV Experience filled a gap in the market not offered elsewhere.

How many ULEV Loans were provided?

A total of 75 loans, across 41 organisations, were delivered by the ULEV Experience during the two-year programme.

Outcomes

The ULEV Loans gave organisations the opportunity to try the latest electric and plug-in hybrid cars and vans, with some vehicles proving more popular than others. The table below highlights the number of times each vehicle model was trialed by an organisation.

Vehicle	Number of Loans
Hyundai Kona Electric	19
Hyundai Ioniq Electric	5
Kia e-Niro	6
Kia Niro PHEV	2
Nissan LEAF	9
Renault ZOE	4
Volkswagen e-Golf	4
Nissan e-NV200	18
Renault Kangoo ZE	8

Following the completion of a ULEV Loan a number of organisations went on to order electric vehicles as replacements for existing fleet vehicles. The table below highlights the number of electric vehicle models that have been ordered from consortia partner DriveElectric following a ULEV Loan.

Vehicle	Number of Orders
Hyundai Kona Electric	1
Jaguar I-PACE	4
Kia e-Niro	1
MG ZS EV	1
Nissan e-NV200	19
Tesla Model 3	2
Volkswagen e-Golf	1

75
Loans

41
Organisations



What have we learnt from ULEV Loans?

ULEV Loans provided organisations with risk-free access to electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles, enabling them to assess their usefulness within their specific company operation.

ULEV loans were more successful when delivered either alongside or after a company had received a Fleet Review. This approach allowed the company to trial the vehicle within the operations identified as suitable by a Fleet Review.

Robust company qualification is required to properly evaluate which loan vehicle would be best for their operations. Such a qualification involved discussions around what they would be using the vehicle for and what vehicles they currently have on their fleet.

Face-to-face handovers are essential to ensure that companies get a full briefing of the vehicle's capabilities and controls. In addition, it allows the opportunity to discuss the other programme offerings, such as Events, Fleet Reviews and Grants.

Having multiple ULEV makes and models available gives organisations the opportunity to trial a variety of vehicles to assess their capability within their operations. However, a balance needs to be made between variety and multiple numbers of specific ULEV models.

While a month-long ULEV loan was appropriate for larger organisations, smaller businesses were more comfortable receiving a two-week loan.

Covering the short-term vehicle insurance costs for smaller businesses and sole traders to participate in the ULEV Loans was necessary, having discovered smaller organisations were struggling to access cost effective vehicle insurance to enable them to engage in a ULEV Loan.

Companies engaged with the ULEV Experience subsequently ordered 29 electric vehicles with DriveElectric, and a large number of companies stated that they would be looking to order electric and plug-in hybrid vehicles at their next replacement cycle.

Communication & Business Engagement

The ULEV Experience project's Events, Fleet Reviews and ULEV Loans could only be delivered due to one other thing happening: business engagement. And business engagement can only be successful if effective communication is carried out.

THE SYSTEM FOR EFFECTIVE COMMUNICATION INCLUDES:

Strategy

Branding & design style

Copywriting

Photography/imagery

Video content

Website

Design of communication materials (digital and printed)

Events/exhibitions

Ongoing direction of marketing and communication including PR and social media





What have we learnt from Communication & Business Engagement?

Communication for the ULEV Experience programme, directed by Automotive Comms, harnessed all the elements in the system above, and enabled the outcomes for the Events, Fleet Reviews and ULEV Loans to be achieved.

With a project such as the ULEV Experience, operating for just a two-year period, it is essential to 'hit the ground running'. In other words, a communication strategy is essential, and this needs to be implemented as extensively and as professionally as possible from day one, including working with intermediaries to share the communication. Any delays in doing this will mean that enquiries will be slow at the start of the project.

By the end of the ULEV Experience project, momentum had built to the extent that there was more demand for Events, Reviews and ULEV Loans than could be satisfied before the project finished. It would have been ideal to have a continuation project in place to immediately capitalise on the interest that had been built up.

Other learning points:

- Such projects need to start with an existing GDPR-compliant database of target audiences, including named contacts. Discussions around contact sharing and the likely impacts on GDPR must be undertaken at project kick-off.
- E-newsletters were sent, to named contacts, and these worked effectively to gain business engagement. However, it is important to maintain a consistent schedule (e.g. bi-monthly) with relevant content to ensure the newsletters retain their impact.
- Social media should be an important element of communication for such projects but effective social media channels to target audiences are required.
- Nottingham-wide leaflet drops were trialled as a way of increasing business awareness of the programme offering. Due to GDPR concerns relating to other databases, the local business rates database was used, however the impact was limited as it did not contain named contacts.
- A trial was also undertaken using telemarketing as a way of increasing business awareness. However, as with the leaflet drops, without named contacts, this was a time-consuming process and only generated around 15 leads.

What we've learnt

1

In the face of legislation and initiatives such as imminent Clean Air Zones, practical – and critically, strategically planned and joined-up – **support is needed to help businesses make the shift to ULEVs.**

2

Targeting businesses needs effective marketing and communication. This includes sharing messages by working with intermediaries and stakeholders such as local business support organisations including the Chamber of Commerce, business networks and the Growth Hub to help widen the communications reach.

3

For projects with a time-limited duration, it's essential to **'hit the ground running'**, ie. a communication strategy needs to be developed and implemented as extensively and as professionally as possible from day one.

4

Different businesses are at different stages of the ULEV journey – ranging from having no knowledge about EVs, to already operating an EV fleet – engagement with businesses needs to take this into account.

5

A range of **events** – different subjects and different event formats – need to be targeted at different business needs.

6

Supporting businesses to experience EVs through **'try before you buy' loans** is extremely valuable, especially in conjunction with fleet reviews.

7

Businesses tend to listen to other businesses in preference to government or public sector organisations, so **case studies** from businesses that are making the switch to EVs are important.

8

Public sector organisations can be successful ULEV early adopters for a range of reasons, including driving cycles of their fleets often being ideally suited to electric vehicles.

9

EV charging infrastructure is a genuine concern for businesses, and this concern needs to be addressed – knowledge transfer on this subject through events is one way to help with this. Support is maximised if the local authority has a package of grant support to contribute to the installation of ULEV charging infrastructure for business and public sector organisations.

10

It's important that local authorities embrace ULEV innovation; have clear strategic leadership around air quality; and have dynamic clean air and carbon neutral **strategies and plans that help maximise the opportunities from a programme of ULEV intervention.** Local authorities may not have in-house EV expertise, but the ULEV Experience has shown that experts can work in partnership with local authorities to deliver a successful business support programme.

The view from Nottingham City Council

Nottingham is an ambitious city and Nottingham City Council is spearheading cleaner air and carbon neutrality, asking Nottingham citizens, communities, workforces, businesses, public and voluntary sector organisations to all help by becoming cleaner, greener and more sustainable. The Council recognises that the Workplace Travel Service and ULEV Experience has become an important catalyst, using a range of support and engagement to help workforces contribute to air quality improvements and carbon emission reductions.

The Council values partnership working and recognises that the ULEV Experience & Workplace Travel Service has been successful in influencing change by:

ULEV Loans

Providing workforces with the means to try out electric vehicles and access more sustainable transport to increase the likelihood that workforces transition to ULEVs.

Fleet Reviews

Supporting businesses and organisations to use the Fleet Review process as a fleet management tool, focusing attention on where financial and carbon savings can be realised.

Business Engagement & Events

Delivering a series of ULEV learning events increasing the pool of local knowledge about how best to transition to sustainable transport, upskilling and providing knowledge and expertise that helps other businesses and organisations make a similar switch.

Grants

Providing grants to businesses and organisations for sustainable transport infrastructure, increasing the likelihood that financial incentives and support encourages and persuades workforces to transition to cleaner, greener transport and commuting.





Partners

The Workplace Travel Service and ULEV Experience has been supported by Nottingham City Council's Go Ultra Low City funding.

The programme has been delivered by a consortium led by Cenex, with partners from DriveElectric, Energy Saving Trust, RideWise, CleanTech Business and Automotive Comms.



Funding

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Office for
Low Emission
Vehicles



Department
for Transport

Contact

Nottingham City Council Workplace Travel Service

Website: www.transportnottingham.com/projects/workplace-travel-service/
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Useful Links

Carbon Neutral Nottingham & Action Plan:
www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/your-council/about-the-council/nottingham-2028
Local Plan to Improve Air Quality in Nottingham:
www.nottinghaminsight.org.uk/f/aBFyzqe
Nottingham Taxi Strategy:
www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/media/456172/taxi-strategy-feb17.pdf

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