

Leading the charge on World EV Day!

Highways England is super-charging a green incentive scheme with a multi-million pound investment that allows businesses to try electric vehicles for free before they buy.

In an initiative designed to encourage a shift to cleaner, lower carbon vehicles, the company is handing £9.3 million to local authorities to encourage businesses with diesel van fleets to make the switch to electric.

It works by offering the businesses a free trial of electric vehicles for two months.

Following a successful pilot with the Energy Saving Trust and a launch with Leeds City Council earlier in the year, councils in Coventry, Kent, Nottingham, and Sheffield are working to set up their own schemes. And today on World EV (Electric Vehicle) Day (9 September) the company has announced over £3 million of funding has been agreed with Bristol City Council.

It is among a host of measures Highways England is taking to improve air quality and tackle carbon emissions from road transport as the UK takes steps to become a zero-carbon economy by 2050.

The scheme has been made possible by Highways England's Designated Funds programme designed to benefit people, the economy and the planet with an overall investment of £936m between 2020 and 2025.

Jim O'Sullivan, Highways England Chief Executive, said:

We are working with councils across the country to encourage businesses to make the switch to electric vehicles and we expect many more to start using electric vehicles when they experience the savings possible.

This is a key example of how we are using designated funds to benefit the environment and communities around our roads as well as the people travelling and working on them.

The company's Designated Funds programme has already delivered over 2,000 schemes between 2015 and 2020.

Transport Secretary Grant Shapps said:

Whether you're taking a trip with the family or commuting to work, with the wide range of models at competitive prices, it is now more cost-effective and convenient than ever to drive and charge an electric vehicle.

This together with our continued support for R&D, will see talented UK-based SMEs flourish, as well as more than 6,000 skilled jobs created up and down the country.

This is why, on the world's first ever day dedicated to celebrating electric vehicles, I'm delighted to announce our unwavering support for a cleaner, greener transport future.

The electric vehicles will contribute to improving air quality in cities and towns, and help reduce carbon emissions. They have also been put to good use during the COVID-19 pandemic.

Over the last five months, electric vans used for the trial scheme in Leeds have also been driven more than 10,000 miles as part of the city's emergency coronavirus response. The vehicles have been used in a number of ways including delivering local food parcels to those self-isolating or shielding, transporting key council key workers and supporting the work of vital third sector organisations.

Councillor James Lewis, Deputy Leader of Leeds City Council said:

Since launching the EV Trials scheme with Highways England in January, we've had a great response. Hundreds of local businesses and charities have already signed up to the scheme and it's fantastic to see so many organisations leading by example.

It's still early days, but it's really promising to see participants starting to invest in electric vehicles of their own. Every organisation choosing to switch to EVs is making a real difference—helping to clean the air we breathe and tackle the climate emergency.

Highways England's Designated Funds programme is divided into four funding streams aimed at making the biggest difference and delivering lasting benefits; environment and wellbeing, users and community, safety and congestion and innovation and modernisation. Between 2015 and 2020 the programme has:

- ensured over 95 per cent of England's motorways and major A-roads are within 20 miles of a rapid electric vehicle charging point.
- reduced the impact of noise for around 50,000 people living alongside motorways and implemented measures to reduce air pollution at identified hotspots.
- delivered more than 160 cycle schemes including upgraded crossings to improve connectivity with local communities.
- tackled 260 locations vulnerable to flooding with improved drainage and ecology.

Other achievements include 124 biodiversity initiatives, 150 safety improvements on single carriageway roads to reduce the number of people

killed or seriously injured and over 6,500 lights and traffic signals converted to LED.

General enquiries

Members of the public should contact the Highways England customer contact centre on 0300 123 5000.

Media enquiries

Journalists should contact the Highways England press office on 0844 693 1448 and use the menu to speak to the most appropriate press officer.

CNC joins forces with Kent Police in new community patrol initiative

The CNC, which is responsible for the protection of civil nuclear sites and has jurisdiction over the surrounding area of the site in Dungeness, will work together with Kent Police's local policing teams to create joint patrols in the district.

An officer from each force will pair up to respond to calls received by Kent Police, as well as undertake routine and pro-active patrols, and carry out local enquiries.

The initiative will launch later this week with patrols taking place from Friday (11/9).

It is hoped that by working with another force, the CNC officers will be able to enhance their skills in policing. In addition, the initiative will give Kent Police a greater range of resources to help keep the county safe.

Many of the CNC officers are also trained as medics and can provide initial emergency medical care at a scene, should the situation arise.

To support the initiative, funding has been given through the Folkestone and Hythe Community Safety Partnership, to provide first responder medical equipment which will be used by the officers when required.

Kent Police District Commander for Ashford, Folkestone and Hythe, Chief Inspector Nick Sparkes said: "We are excited to welcome our colleagues from the CNC to work directly alongside us to keep Kent safe.

"We hope they find this initiative beneficial as they will be able to see how our teams respond to the many varied and sometimes challenging incidents we deal with daily.

“By working together, it can only enhance the service we already provide to our communities in Lydd and New Romney. Importantly it will also mean that some of the more rural areas of the district will benefit from additional first responders out on patrol.”

Insp Andy Oatham, Operational Unit Commander at Dungeness power station, said: “We have worked closely with Kent Police for a number of years providing assistance where necessary however this new initiative will see our officers patrolling proactively together with Kent Police colleagues.

“Our officers have exactly the same powers as their Home Office colleagues however this initiative will give them the chance to widen their policing experience, whilst ensuring that our primary and critical role of protecting the national infrastructure safe from any threat is maintained. We look forward to working with them on this new initiative.”

[CMA to assess progress in legal services sector](#)

News story

The CMA is reviewing the legal services sector in England and Wales to assess whether transparency of price, quality and service have improved.



In 2016, the CMA carried out a market study into the supply of legal services in England and Wales, concluding that competition for individual consumers and small businesses was not working well. In particular, there was not enough information available on price, quality and service to help those who need legal support choose the best option.

It also found that obtaining the right service at good value can be challenging as consumers face wide variations in the cost of similar services. They can also struggle to find enough information to help them identify their legal need in the first place.

The CMA made recommendations to industry regulators to improve transparency by legal firms on price, quality and service, and to enable customers to navigate the market more easily and get value for money. It also made recommendations on regulatory reform, including to the Ministry of Justice to consider whether consumers of unregulated services need stronger protections and to review the regulatory framework for the longer term.

The CMA indicated in its market study report that it would assess progress in the sector after several years and is now doing so. Its short, focused review will assess the extent to which the market study recommendations have been taken forward and the impact that these changes have had on competition.

The [3-month long review](#) will help the CMA examine if further measures are necessary to increase consumer engagement and help drive increased competition. It will look at existing evidence from regulatory monitoring and other available research, as well as submissions from interested parties.

As part of its review, the CMA has put out a [call for inputs](#). Further information is available on the [legal services case page](#).

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[UK Internal Market Bill introduced today](#)

A new Bill to protect jobs and trade across the whole of the United Kingdom after the Transition Period ends will be introduced to parliament today (Wednesday 9 September).

The UK Internal Market Bill will guarantee companies can trade unhindered in every part of the UK as they have done for centuries, ensuring the continued prosperity of people and business across four parts of the UK, while maintaining our world-leading high standards for consumers, workers, food, animal welfare and the environment.

From 1 January 2021, powers in a range of policy areas previously exercised at an EU level will flow directly to the devolved administrations in Holyrood, Cardiff Bay and Stormont for the first time. This will give the devolved legislatures power over more issues than they have ever had before, including over air quality, energy efficiency of buildings and elements of employment law, without removing any of their current powers.

Once the Transition Period ends, rules that have regulated how each home nation trades with each other over the past 45 years will fall away. Without urgent legislation to preserve the status quo of seamless internal trade,

rules and regulations set in Scotland, England, Wales and Northern Ireland could create new barriers to trade between different parts of the UK, unnecessary red tape for business and additional costs for consumers. Data shows that the combined total sales from Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland to the rest of the United Kingdom were worth over £90 billion in 2018.

Today's Bill will avoid this uncertainty for business by creating an open, fair, and competitive market across the United Kingdom, ensuring regulations from one part of the country will be recognised in another. Each devolved administration will still be able to set their own standards as they do now, while also being able to benefit from the trade of businesses based anywhere in the UK. The rules in this bill will also bind the UK Government when acting on behalf of England in areas of devolved competence.

Business Secretary Alok Sharma said:

For centuries the UK's internal market has been the cornerstone of our shared prosperity, delivering unparalleled stability and economic growth across the Union.

Today's Bill will protect our highly integrated market by guaranteeing that companies can continue to trade unhindered in every part of the UK after the Transition Period ends and EU law falls away.

By providing clarity over rules that will govern the UK economy after we take back control of our money and laws, we can increase investment and create new jobs across the United Kingdom, while our maintaining world-leading standards for consumers, workers, food and the environment.

Without these necessary reforms, the way we trade goods and services between the home nations could be seriously impacted, harming the way we do business within our own borders. Now is not the time to create uncertainty for business with new barriers and additional costs that would trash our chances of an economic recovery.

Scottish Secretary Alister Jack said:

We are taking action to protect the vital UK internal market, while respecting and strengthening devolution, by ensuring that goods can continue to travel barrier-free through the UK when the Transition Period ends.

Without this legislation there would be a serious risk to our jobs and businesses which is not surprising given the rest of the UK is Scotland's biggest market, worth £55 billion a year, and a massive sixty per cent of all our exports.

EU powers are also being returned to us so we can further invest in communities and businesses in Scotland to help us bounce back from the economic shock of coronavirus.

Our proposals to safeguard the UK internal market are complementary to our ongoing work to develop UK-wide frameworks and I hope the devolved administration will work with us as we take this forward.

The Bill will also enable the UK Government to provide financial assistance to Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland with new powers to spend taxpayers' money previously administered by the EU. From January 2021, the UK will be able to invest in communities and businesses nationwide with powers covering infrastructure, economic development, culture, sport, and support for educational, training and exchange opportunities both within the UK and internationally – much of which were previously done at an EU level.

The transfer of powers from the EU to the UK Government will complement and strengthen existing support given to citizens in Scotland, Wales, and Northern Ireland by the devolved administrations, without taking away their responsibilities. A strong UK Internal Market, with the ability of the UK Government to invest to support all parts of our Union, will help the UK Government to deliver prosperity for businesses and communities across all parts of the UK, levelling up the country and strengthening the Union.

The proposals will allow the UK Government to meet its commitments to deliver replacements for EU programmes, such as a UK Shared Prosperity Fund, replacing bureaucratic EU structural funds and at a minimum match the size of those funds in each nation.

The Bill will also set out limited and reasonable steps to ensure that the government is always able to deliver on its commitments to the people of Northern Ireland. The UK Government remains fully committed to implementing the Withdrawal Agreement and Northern Ireland Protocol.

However, at all stages we must, as a responsible government, ensure that we have the ability to uphold our commitments to the people of Northern Ireland, preserve the huge gains of the peace process and protect Northern Ireland's place in our United Kingdom – as set out in the Command Paper published in May.

Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster Michael Gove said:

The devolved administrations of the UK will enjoy a power surge when the Transition Period ends in December. Holyrood, Stormont and Cardiff Bay will soon have more powers than ever before and there will be no change to the powers the devolved administrations already have.

This Bill will also give the UK Government new spending powers to drive our economic recovery from COVID-19 and support businesses and communities right across the UK.

No longer will unelected EU bodies be spending our money on our behalf. These new spending powers will mean that these decisions will now be made in the UK, focus on UK priorities and be accountable to the UK Parliament and people of the UK.

The UK Government has also laid out plans to establish an independent monitoring body, the Office for the Internal Market (OIM), to support the smooth running of trade within the United Kingdom. The body will sit within the Competition and Markets Authority (CMA) and provide independent, technical advice to parliament and the devolved administrations on regulation that may damage the UK's internal market.

The reporting and monitoring role undertaken by the OIM will be non-binding and carried independently from ministers and devolved administrations, ensuring impartiality and transparency when developing its evidence. Where there is a matter of dispute, the OIM will ultimately provide such reports to the UK Parliament and each of the devolved legislatures and it will be for these bodies, supported by their respective administrations and intergovernmental processes, to determine how to take action in response, minimising the need to seek court action.

Andrea Coscelli, CEO of the Competition and Markets Authority, said:

The new independent Office for the Internal Market will stand ready to provide technical advice to the UK Government and parliament and the devolved administrations and legislatures on the smooth running of trade within the United Kingdom. The CMA will ensure that the OIM fulfils its role with professionalism, impartiality and analytical rigour.

Without this action to preserve the status quo of seamless domestic trade, businesses across the UK could face serious problems: a Welsh lamb producer could end up unable to sell their lamb in Scotland, or Scotch whisky producers could lose access to supply from English barley farmers. These proposals create certainty for businesses that might otherwise face a complex and increasingly fragmented regulatory environment.

The UK's existing high standards across areas including environmental standards, workers' rights, animal welfare and food standards will underpin the functioning of the Internal Market to protect consumers and workers across the economy. The UK Government is committed to maintaining high standards in these areas, including in all free trade agreement negotiations.

More than 270 businesses, charities, academics and industry groups responded to a public consultation on the proposals, launched in July. Responses showed overwhelming support from businesses for the measures to avoid additional costs to doing business between different parts of the UK and providing vital certainty for firms from January 2021.

Audrey Baxter, Executive Chairman and Chief Executive of Fochabers-based

Baxters Food Group Limited said:

Our Scottish brand is known throughout the UK and it is vitally important to us that we can continue to trade freely in all parts of the country. We welcome the UK Government's Internal Market legislation which will preserve and protect the current trading conditions. This will continue to guarantee a level playing field for companies like ours and is crucial to our continued success.

David Lonsdale, Director of the Scottish Retail Consortium, said:

Scottish consumers and our economy as a whole benefit enormously from the UK's largely unfettered internal single market, as economies of scale and regulatory consistency helps reduce business costs which in turn keeps down shop prices and provides greater consumer choice. We welcome the government's recognition of that and the aim to keep it as simple and as easy as possible for retailers and other firms to continue to trade.

[Contract for world's deepest nuclear clean-up awarded](#)

News story

Dounreay has awarded a major contract as the world's deepest nuclear clean-up job gets underway.



The 65 metre deep shaft where advanced transition works will begin

Dounreay Site Restoration Ltd (DSRL), on behalf of the Nuclear

Decommissioning Authority, awarded the £7.5 million contract for “advanced transition works” at the 65 metre deep shaft and silo to Nuvia and its partner Graham Construction, through the site’s decommissioning framework following a competitive tendering process. Nuvia is an international nuclear engineering, project management, products and services contractor.

The work will include the rerouting of existing services as well as minor construction and demolition works, preparing the 2 waste facilities to be emptied of legacy higher activity waste.

DSRL Programme Delivery Director, David Hubbard, said:

The shaft and silo contain solid waste and sludge which must be retrieved and repackaged for safe above-ground storage. I’m very pleased that we are one step closer to the clean up of these historic waste facilities through the award of this contract.

Physical work on site is expected to take place in late autumn 2020. In the meantime the company has been delivering activities remotely.

DSRL is the site licence company responsible for the clean-up and demolition of Britain’s former centre of fast reactor research and development. A wholly-owned subsidiary of the Cavendish Dounreay Partnership, it is funded by the NDA to deliver the site closure programme.

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