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Green cabs¹: is London ready for electric taxis?



5 London follows cities such as Amsterdam and Bangalore by introducing electric taxis next year, but some see problems on the road ahead

The mayor of London wants all black cabs and private-hire taxis to be 'zero emission capable' by 2033.

10 John Dowd, this 48-year-old from Sudbury, north-west London, isn't part of some reality television show: he's test-driving a new, electric version of the black cab.

From the beginning of 2018, new licensed taxis in London [must be "zero emissions capable"](#), able to drive on electric power for at least 48km and with limited emissions.

Vehicle manufacturer the London Taxi Company is rebranding as the London Electric
15 Vehicle Company (LEVC) and asking several London cabbies to test six of its electric and petrol-powered TX taxis on the roads.(...)

Having already [sold 225 electric taxis](#) to the Dutch, and opened a new manufacturing plant in Coventry, LEVC is expecting deliveries to London within weeks. The cabs are priced at £55,599, costing drivers £177 per week for five years. The mayor of London and Transport
20 for London (TfL) have [grants of £42m](#) – up to £5,000 a vehicle – for cabbies to de-license and retire their diesel black cabs, while a government ["plug-in grant"](#) offers up to £8,000, depending on vehicle size, towards buying electric/hybrid vehicles.

London is aiming for "the greenest taxi fleet in the world", with mayor Sadiq Khan [acknowledging](#) the city's "filthy air is a health crisis that needs urgent action". It is
25 thought to cause nearly [9,500 premature deaths](#) each year(...)

The new electric and petrol-powered taxi will save drivers an average of £100 a week in fuel costs compared with the outgoing diesel model, the London Taxi Company says. (...)

But some people see problems already: "The first issue is there's not enough rapid chargers in London and "there's a "long lead time" to get a site, ensure sufficient electricity
30 and install charge points".

Some people will always want a cab service, though and the near future is electric.

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(329 words)

¹ Cab : taxi

⁵ Grant : subvention