

Skip to content Register Sign In Traffic pollution down in first year of Glasgow LEZ 19 September 2024  
Share Save Jamie Russell BBC Scotland News Getty Images Glasgow City Centre street viewGetty Images Glasgow's Low Emission Zone operates throughout the city centre to cut harmful air pollutants  
The levels of air pollution from vehicles in Glasgow's city centre low-emission zone fell by more than areas outside it last year, newly released data shows. Some areas within the city centre are still breaching the legal limits for NO<sub>2</sub> pollution but the council said the results for the first seven months of the LEZ were "really encouraging". A map of Glasgow's Low Emission Zone. It encompasses landmarks including Glasgow Central, Buchanan Bus Station, George Square and the St Enoch centre Glasgow's Low Emission Zone began in June 2023 Nitrogen dioxide is a gas mainly produced during the combustion of fossil fuels and is the main pollutant from motor vehicles, especially those with diesel engines. The LEZ, which began in June 2023, restricts access to the city centre zone for the most polluting vehicles. Levels of NO<sub>2</sub> pollution have been on a downward trend in recent years as a result of general improvements in vehicle emissions and the introduction of a LEZ for scheduled bus services in 2018. They dropped significantly in 2020 due to Covid travel restrictions and, despite an increase in 2021, have remained below pre-pandemic rates since. Monitoring of NO<sub>2</sub> is carried out using a combination of automatic stations and diffusion tubes. Use of diffusion tubes allows monitoring at more locations but is less accurate. Getty Images A bus drives past a Glasgow LEZ sign near a bridgeGetty Images An LEZ for buses has been in operation in Glasgow since 2018 The council said two locations within the LEZ continued to record levels of NO<sub>2</sub> above permitted levels. Gordon Street, outside Glasgow Central railway station, which is mainly used as a taxi rank, was one of the locations that exceeded the target. Taxis have been given more time to comply with the LEZ rules and 778 exemptions were issued for the first year. Another location, under the railway bridge at Heilanman's Umbrella, also breached the targets. The council said this was due to "poor dispersion" of the pollution. Getty Images Drone view of Nelson monument in Glasgow Green parkGetty Images "Urban greening" projects are to be supported by LEZ revenue By law, revenue from fines for uncompliant vehicles entering the LEZ must be spent on projects to meet net-zero and clean air targets. Glasgow City Council has now announced a GBP250,000 fund to give grants to local organisations who have projects to "improve air quality and reduce emissions". A further GBP250,000 has been made available to "city-wide tree planting and greening projects" as well as a tree sponsorship scheme. This was more than the reduction in areas outside the city centre, which saw a 15.3% drop in concentrations of the harmful air pollutant.