

Bath's Clean Air Zone



**Climate Emergency and Sustainability
Policy Review Panel
21 June 2021**

Bath & North East
Somerset Council

Improving People's Lives



Background

This is the next in a series of updates to the Panel and the first following the launch of the scheme on 15 March 2021.

As a reminder:

- There are a number of roadsides in Bath where NO₂ exceeds the EU and national legal limit of 40 µg/m³, mainly caused by diesel and older petrol vehicles.
- This seriously affects health. It can worsen existing heart and lung conditions, such as asthma, and reduce lung development in babies and young children. 12,000 people in the area suffer from asthma and high levels of NO₂ can trigger attacks.
- Approximately 40,000 deaths can be attributed to NO₂ and fine particulate matter pollution in England every year.
- For the first time, air pollution has been cited as materially contributing to the death of an individual, Ella Adoo-Kissi-Debrah.
- **The implementation of the CAZ is a significant behaviour change process for the residents and businesses of Bath and North East Somerset.**



Preparation for the CAZ launch

Since September 2020, the following has been completed:

- From December 2020, advance signage was in place reminding the public of the launch date of 15 March 2021
- A regional communications campaign, including radio advertising, was launched in Jan 2021 by the government
- Over 8000 early warning letters were issued to drivers of non-compliant vehicles driving within the CAZ prior to launch
- 9500 businesses were contacted via telemarketing company to raise awareness of the launch and the financial help available
- Core scheme ANPR cameras and software tested extensively with government teams
- Financial assistance scheme was promoted and a surge in applications was received
- The Project Team was available 7 days per week in the two weeks preceding launch, so that queries could be responded to as quickly as possible



CAZ Mitigations

- A bus upgrade programme with a view to achieving a fully compliant scheduled bus fleet operating in Bath. From our modelling this is a key deliverable to achieving compliance
- A financial assistance scheme providing grants and interest free loans to businesses, individuals and community groups to upgrade non-compliant vehicles. Upgrade rates have exceeded expectations and we are seeking more funding from central government
- Additional last or only mile delivery scheme to support businesses within the zone
- A package of exemptions that support vital services, disadvantaged groups and those with hard-to-replace vehicles, along with a means-tested general exemption as part of the financial assistance scheme



CAZ launch- 15 March 2021

- There were no technical issues on the day of launch
- Media coverage was largely positive with coverage by BBC Radio 4 Today programme, Times Radio and various national newspapers
- Air Quality News describing it as ***“a monumental moment, not just for Bath, but for air pollution up and down the country”***
- B&NES and JAQU teams collaborated well and there were regular, daily check-ins during the first 2 weeks of the scheme going live
- Ongoing discussions between central government and Wiltshire Council on traffic and air quality monitoring

Ongoing support post CAZ launch

- A period of '**soft enforcement**' has taken place where only the zone entry charge has been collected
- There has been additional flexibility for businesses who are struggling to re-open following the pandemic and sourcing compliant vehicles
- Support and flexibility for vehicle owners affected by business rule changes which lead some vehicles (mainly vans and motorhomes) to change from a status of compliant to non-compliant
- Sought clarity about the compliance status of M1 motorhome vehicles which will now be exempted from charges
- Resolved a local software issue which impacted those owners in receipt of exemptions
- Shared learnings and experiences with local authorities launching schemes soon, i.e., Birmingham, Bristol, Portsmouth and Bradford

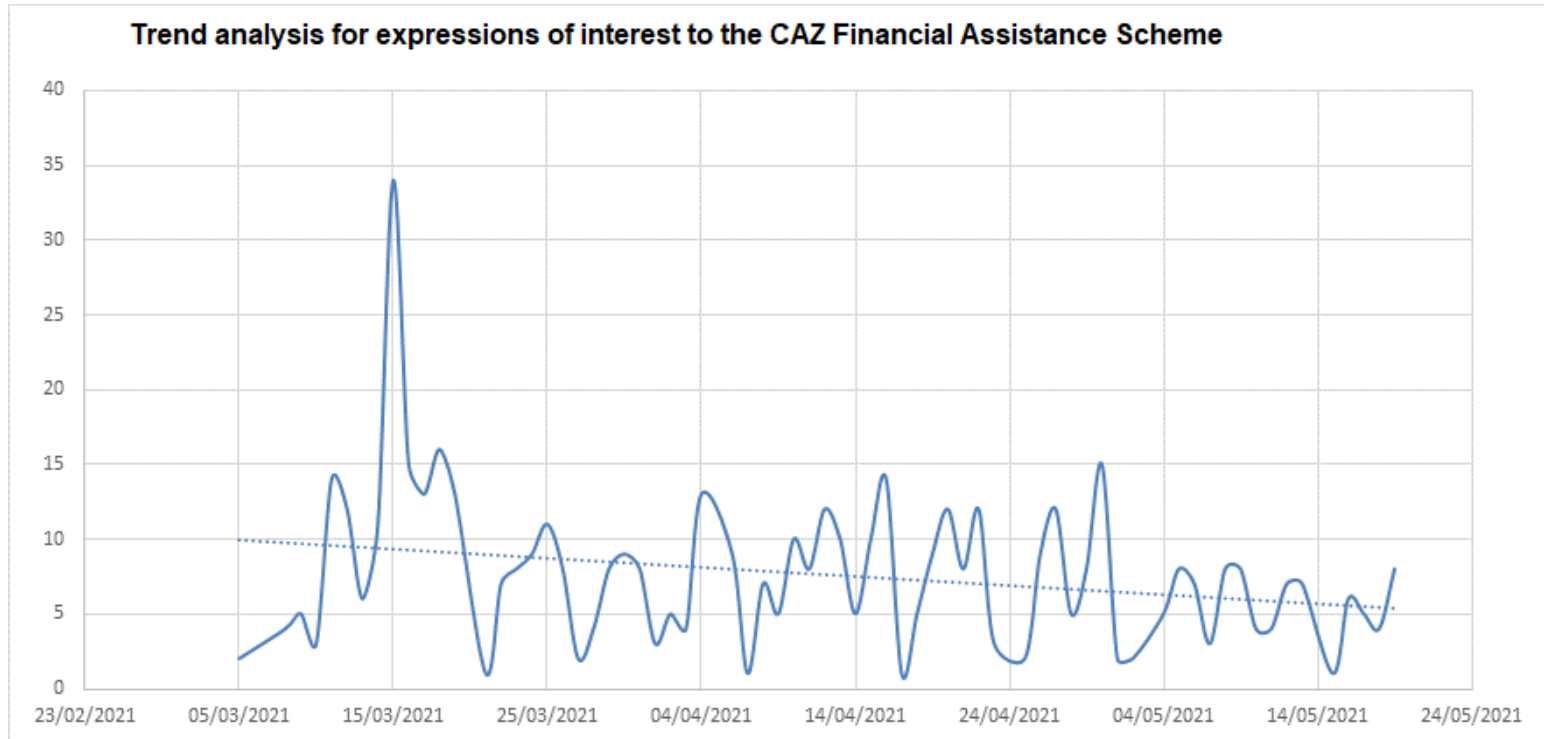


Initial statistics following launch

- Initially, approximately **32,000** vehicles were travelling in the CAZ each day (not including locally exempt vehicles) and older, diesel LGV's represent the largest category of non-compliant, chargeable vehicles which have a disproportionate impact on air quality
- In total the financial assistance scheme has received **2080 expressions of interest**, of which **1650 vehicles** have proceeded to having a telematics device fitted. Of those, **743** owners proceeded to apply for finance and **625** are currently recording telematic data. **506 vehicles** have been approved for upgrade and drivers are in the process of taking ownership of their vehicles in the coming months
- Since launch over **28,000 PCN's** have been issued; typically, 25% relate to vehicle owners within B&NES
- Since launch **over 54,000** zone entry charges have been paid



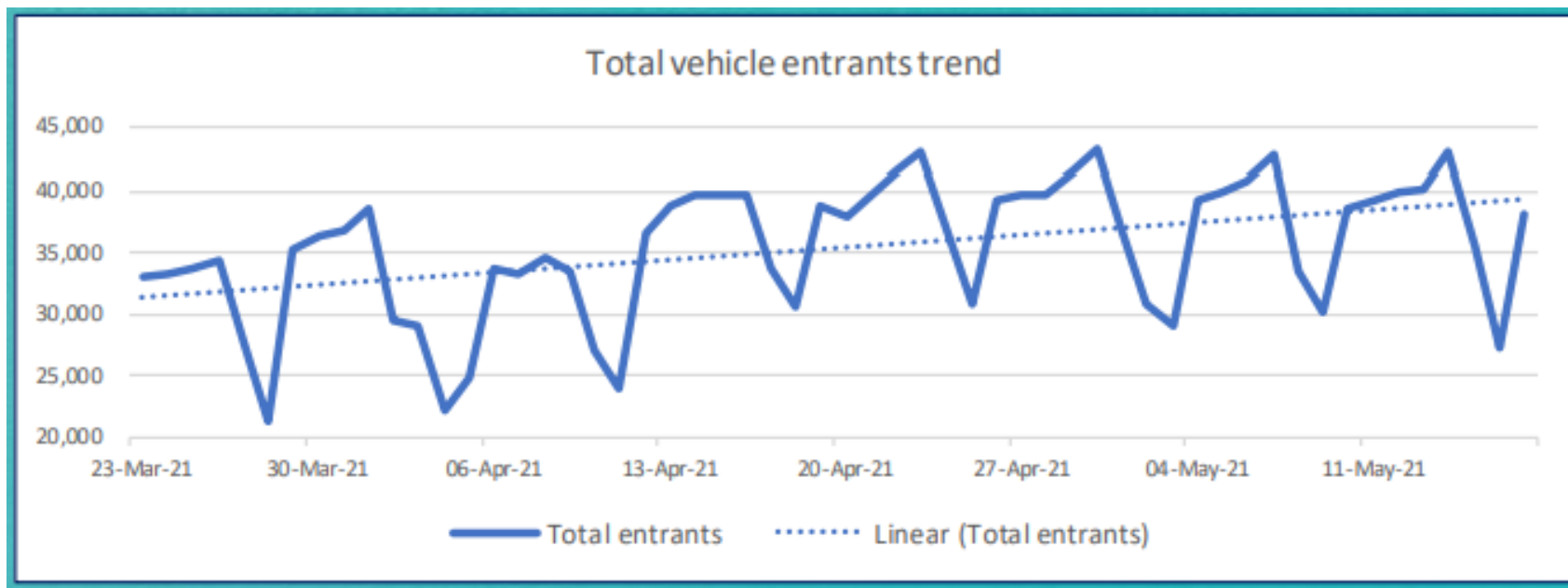
Initial statistics following launch



Source: B&NES Council

There is a downward trend in expressions of interest for financial assistance

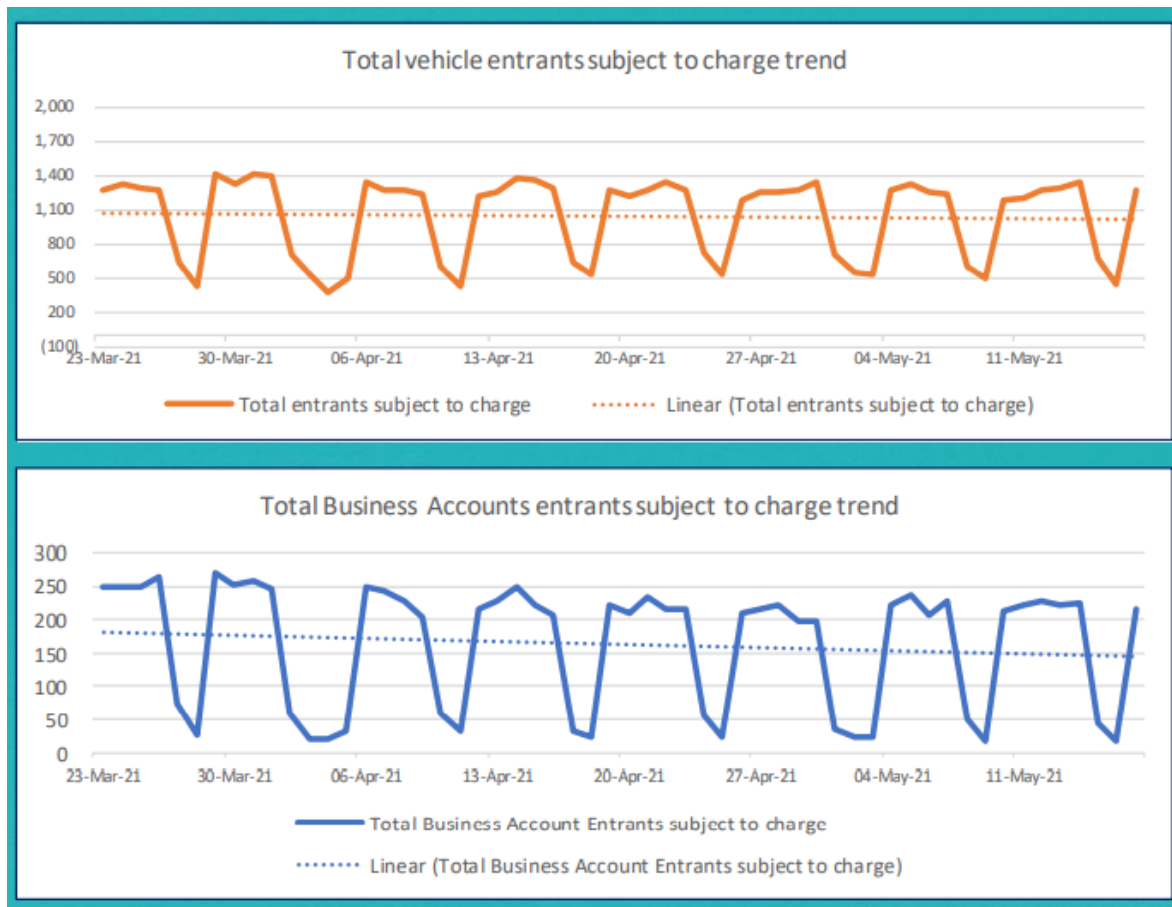
Initial statistics following launch



Source: Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU)

There is an upward trend in the total number of vehicles entering the CAZ boundary on a daily basis, which coincides with the lifting of pandemic restrictions

Initial statistics following launch



There is an emerging downward trend in the number of vehicle entrants which are subject to a CAZ charge which suggests an increasing level of compliance with the scheme

Source: Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU)

Initial statistics following launch

		Payment date relative to travel date												
		Days before travel						Days after travel						
		6	5	4	3	2	1	0	1	2	3	4	5	6
Date	18-Apr	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	19-Apr	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	20-Apr	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M
	21-Apr	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T
	22-Apr	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W
	23-Apr	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T
	24-Apr	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F
	25-Apr	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S
	26-Apr	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S
	27-Apr	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M
	28-Apr	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T
	29-Apr	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W
	30-Apr	S	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T
	01-May	S	M	T	W	T	F	S	S	M	T	W	T	F

Early indications are that most drivers are paying the zone entry charge on the day of travel itself, even though the payment window extends 6 days before and 6 days after this day

Source: Joint Air Quality Unit (JAQU)



Evidence of changing behaviour

Ipsos Mori has been commissioned by government to complete surveys with businesses, before and after the CAZ launch in Bath. Initial results show:

- Awareness of the CAZ has increased; by March 2021 over 70% of businesses knew a great deal or fair amount about the CAZ; this is an increase from approx. 50% in Nov/Dec 2020
- More businesses support the CAZ than oppose it
- Most businesses understand that the CAZ is introduced to improve air quality but there is a misconception that it will generate income for the Council



CAZ financial position

- Predicted costs in the first year have increased because of additional staff resources needed to support those impacted by the business rule change
- An extra £161,500 has been provided by JAQU to help mitigate these costs
- 21/22 year to date income position:

Entry Charges £		PCN income £	
Actual (15 Jun 21)	Budget	Actual (15 Jun 21)	Budget
564,409	2,834,754	117,300*	229,944

*also includes PCN's paid during the soft enforcement period

Initial reflections following launch

- Despite extensive preparations and consultations, some people were unaware/unprepared and need ongoing support as part of the behaviour change process
- The financial assistance scheme has been a key element of delivering a successful launch and provides additional air quality benefit; incentivisation is necessary alongside enforcement
- After 3 months, we continue to have challenging conversations with certain groups to build understanding, but the emerging impression is that the scheme is becoming 'business as usual' for the public
- Following this initial phase, the Behaviour Change Team will begin to have more conversations with car drivers about their options to contribute to improving air quality

Monitoring and Evaluation

- There will be monitoring and evaluation of a range of measures, including air quality, relating to the first 3 months of the scheme. This will be published on the Council's webpages <https://beta.bathnes.gov.uk/bath-clean-air-zone> around late Summer.
- Whilst very few vehicle movements are actually impacted by the CAZ restrictions, there has been a general increase in traffic levels as restrictions have lifted and increases in working from home and home deliveries have meant an increase in vehicle movements in residential areas, we continue to monitor traffic levels across the road network and publish the results of these surveys



Our successes...

- Collaborative working partnership with JAQU to resolve problems and enable delivery of the scheme at pace
- Innovative financial assistance scheme using a framework agreement
- Approach to public consultation has helped to manage down issues and move the public to broad acceptance of the changes
- Use of market research company to reach over 9500 businesses prior to launch
- MOU with Emergency Services about use of compliant vehicles in the city

Next steps...

- Full enforcement of the scheme, including non-UK vehicle enforcement
- Bringing forward other mitigation packages including Only Mile Delivery schemes
- Further updates will be provided to the Panel as the scheme progresses