



Department for Transport

Final Van Statistics April 2019 - March 2020

About this release

This Statistical Release presents the results of a survey of van activity in Great Britain. This is the first DfT statistical research into this sector since surveys in 2008 and 2009. It looks at van keepership, van mileage, where and when vans are traveling, and environmental factors.

These statistics are compiled from responses to a detailed questionnaire, employing data on around 19,900 vans driven by private and business keepers. The survey field work was carried out in 2019-20, prior to the beginning of Covid-19 restrictions in Great Britain.

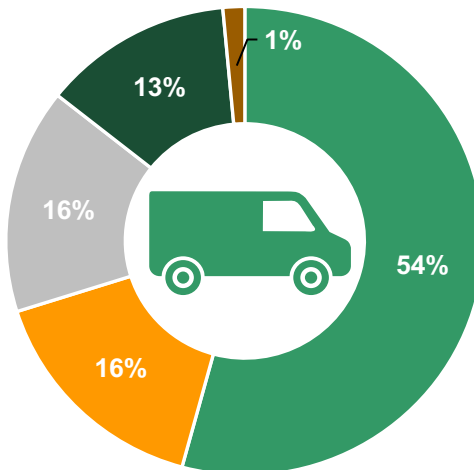
The final findings from the survey are presented here.

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Key Findings

Van Usage in Great Britain, 2019-20 (Table: VAN0201)



Carrying equipment, tools or materials

Delivery/collection of goods

Private/domestic non-business use

Recreational/leisure and holidays

Providing transport to others

- The survey of Great Britain’s van keepers in 2019-20 indicated that the most common primary usage of licensed vans was for ‘carrying equipment, tools and materials’ (54%), followed by ‘delivery/collection of goods’ (16%) and ‘private/domestic non-business use’ (16%).
- Over half (57%) of business kept vans were new; 35% owned outright and 22% owned via a hire purchase agreement. Most privately kept vans were second-hand (82%).
- Over two thirds of vans (67%) travelled on local or rural roads regularly (4 or more days per week), with other main or ‘A’ roads also used regularly by 60% of vans. Fewer vans used dual carriageways and motorways regularly, with only 39% and 21% of vehicles using these roads 4 or more days per week, respectively.
- Around half of all vans (51%) in Great Britain stayed local, within 15 miles of their base, on a typical day.
- Previously released DfT statistics showed that in 2019 0.3% of all vans were classes as ultra low emission vehicles. The most common primary usage of ultra low emission vans was ‘carrying equipment, tools, materials’ (59%).

RESPONSIBLE STATISTICIAN:

Laura Murphy

Email: roadtraff.stats@dft.gov.uk

FURTHER INFORMATION:

Media: 020 7944 3066

Public: 020 7944 3095





2019 licensed vans

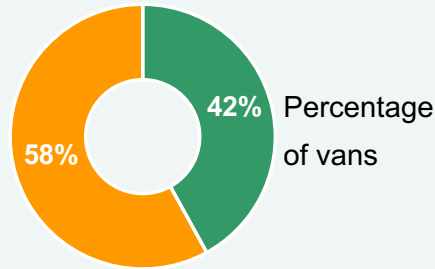


4.1 million
licensed vans



55.5 billion vehicle miles driven by vans

Van keepership



Business

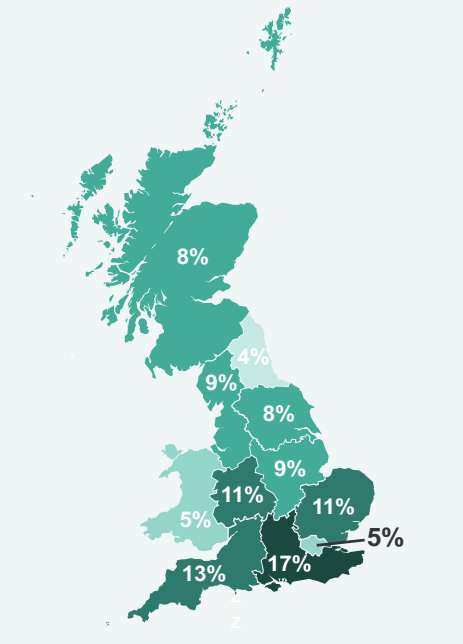
17,500

Private

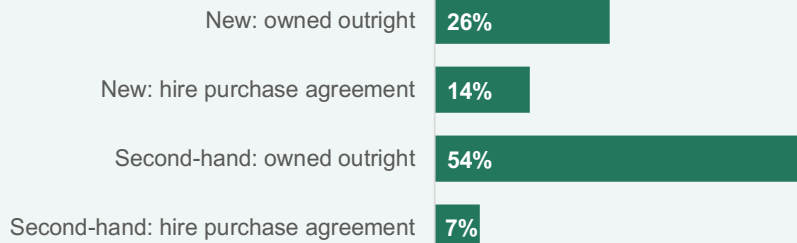
7,400

Average annual mileage

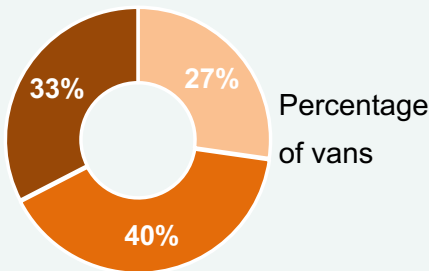
Regional van registrations



How vans were purchased



Age of vans



0-3 years

3-10 years

10+ years

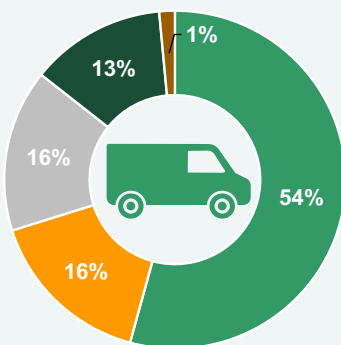
20,000

13,800

7,000

Average annual mileage

Van primary usage



Carrying equipment, tools or materials

Delivery/collection of goods

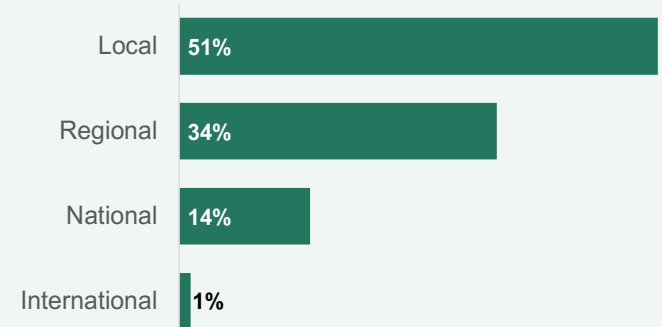
Private/domestic non-business use

Recreational/leisure and holidays

Providing transport to others

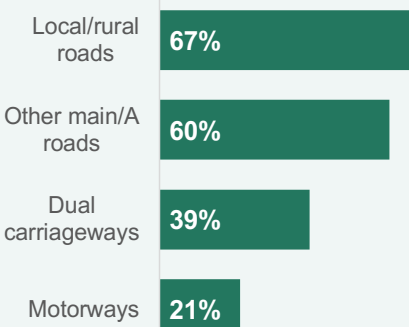
Range of van journeys

Typical range of daily travel from base



Roads used frequently

Travel at least 4 days a week



Ultra low emission vans



10,400 ULEV
licensed vans



61% of ULEV vans
are purchased new



72% of ULEV vans
travel locally

Non-ULEV

ULEV

13,200

7,200

Average annual mileage



Introduction

This section provides an overview of the van sector.



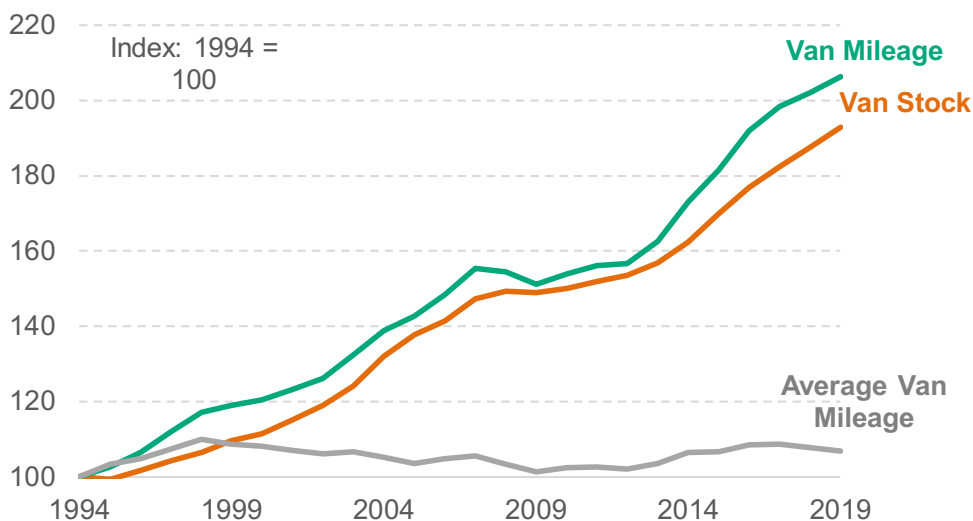
4.1 million
licensed vans in 2019



55.5 billion vehicle miles
driven by vans in 2019

The Department for Transport’s (DfT) road traffic estimates indicate that van travel has grown substantially over the last 25 years, increasing 106% to 55.5 billion vehicle miles in 2019. Van travel as a proportion of all motor vehicle miles has increased from 10% to 16% over the same period.

Trend of Van Stock and Van Traffic, Great Britain 1994-2019



Source: Road Traffic estimates in Great Britain: 2019, Vehicle Licensing Statistics: 2019

Vehicle stock statistics produced by DfT indicate that the number of vans in Great Britain has also increased substantially over the last 25 years (increasing 93% to 4.1 million licensed vans in 2019).

Average annual mileage per van in Great Britain (estimated from van vehicle miles divided by van stock) has remained broadly stable, at around 13,000 miles per year.

Additional information and definitions

Van

(Light commercial vehicles / light vans)
4-wheel vehicles constructed for transporting goods. Must have a gross weight of 3.5 tonnes or less.

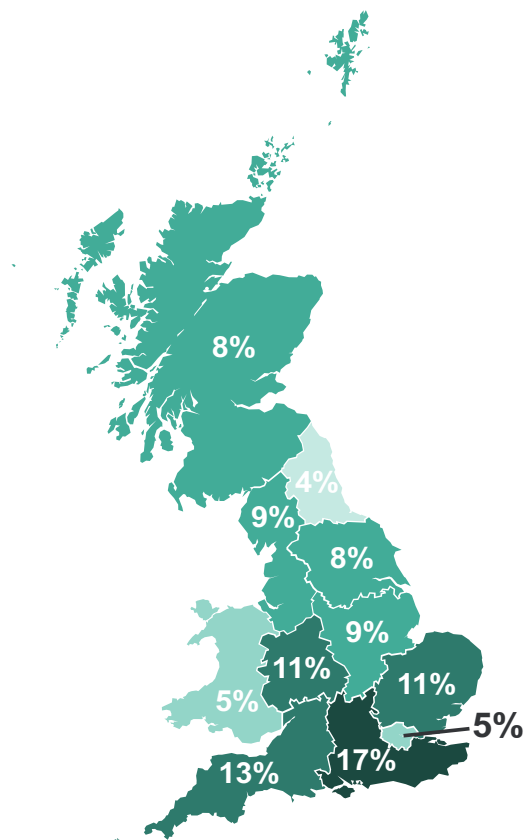
The definition of a van used in this research means that the population covered by this study is smaller than number of licensed vans in Great Britain.

The results of this study estimate van activity of 3.8 thousand vans which drove an estimated 48.3 billion vehicle miles in 2019.

There has been major diversification in the types of vans on the market, including an expanse of car-derived vans, and diversity in propulsion type. However, the Ford Transit remains the most common make and model of van in Great Britain, with over 960,000 licensed as at end 2019.

Vans are predominantly powered by diesel (96% at end 2019). The proportion of vans that were considered to be ultra-low emission in 2019 was 0.3%.

Van Registrations by Region, 2019



Source: Vehicle Licensing Statistics: 2019

In Great Britain in 2019, 87% of vans were registered in England compared to 8% in Scotland and 5% in Wales.

The region with most van registrations was the South East (17%), followed by the South West (13%).

The region with the fewest van registrations was the North East (4%), followed by London (5%).

Survey Overview

The sample used in the survey was drawn from a June 2019 extract of the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA) vehicle database. From this, a stratified random sample of 60,000 vans was selected using the sampling frame: Region, Keeper, Vehicle Age and Fuel Type.

In total there were 19,900 completed surveys received, giving a response rate of 37% for private keepers and 41% for business keepers.

Random Iterative Method (RIM) weighting was applied to the survey responses. This weighting allowed us to estimate the activity of the van population from the final sample.

Further information can be found in the technical report:

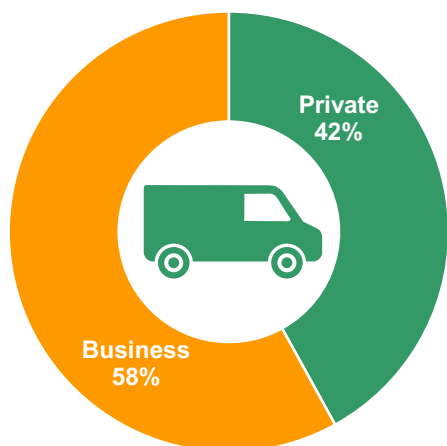
www.gov.uk/guidance/van-statistics-information



Van Keepership

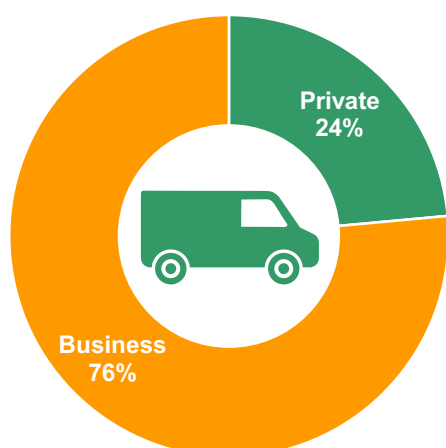
This section provides information about vans by keepership status.

Proportion of Vans by Keepership (Table: VAN0101)



The survey results on van keepership indicate that in 2019-20 there were more business kept vans than those kept privately. The van survey estimates that 2.1 million (58%) are business kept and 1.5 million (42%) are privately kept.

Proportion of Van Mileage by Keepership (Table: VAN0111)



The estimated total annual mileage for the 3.8 million vans covered in the survey was 48.3 billion vehicle miles.

Despite accounting for 42% of van stock, privately kept vans only accounted for 24% of annual mileage (11.0 billion vehicle miles). Business vans accounted for 76% of mileage at 35.7 billion vehicle miles.

Additional information and definitions

Vehicle Keeper/ Keepership

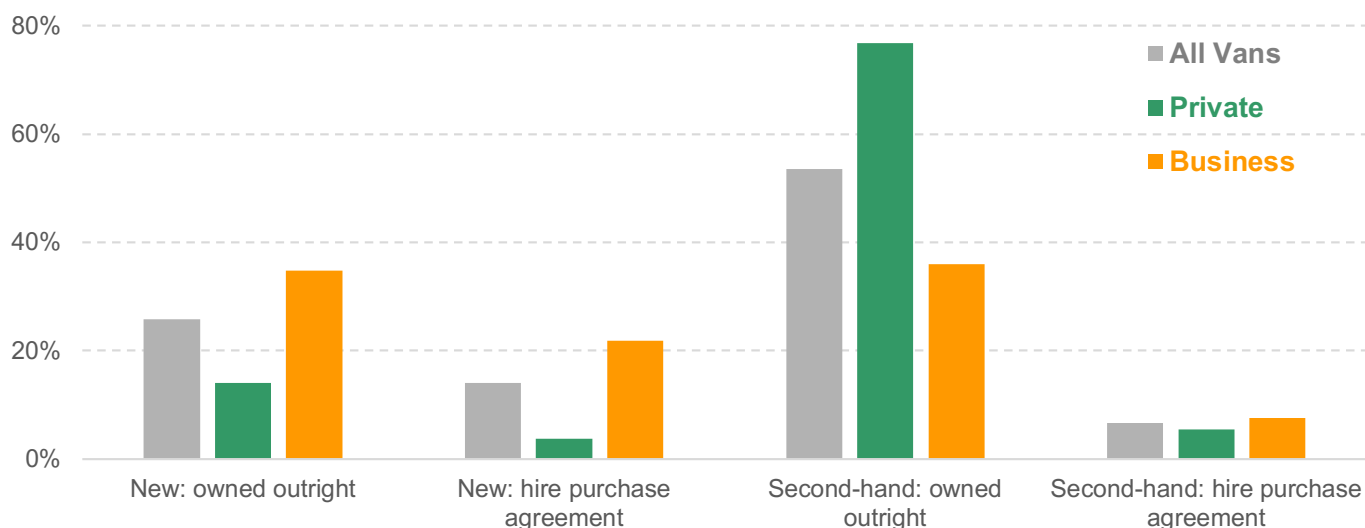
The keeper of the vehicle is responsible for registering and taxing the vehicle only. The keeper of the vehicle is not necessarily the owner or the driver.

A vehicle is either registered to an individual (private) or to a sole trader, partnership, or company (business).

The keepership status used throughout this report is that which was declared in the survey response. Other sources of this information use assumptions from the vehicle keeper details that the vehicle is registered to.

www.gov.uk/government/collections/vehicles-statistics

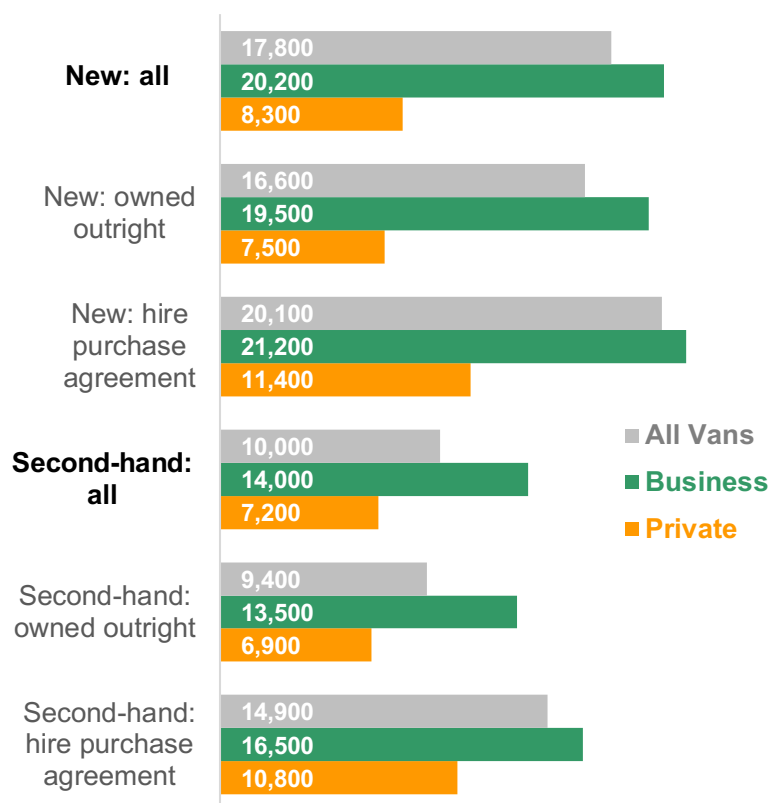
How and When Vans Were Purchased (Table: VAN0104)





The likelihood of a van being second-hand was much greater if privately kept. Over half (57%) of business kept vans were new; 35% owned outright and 22% owned via a hire purchase agreement. Most privately kept vans were second-hand (82%), with 77% of private vans second-hand and owned outright.

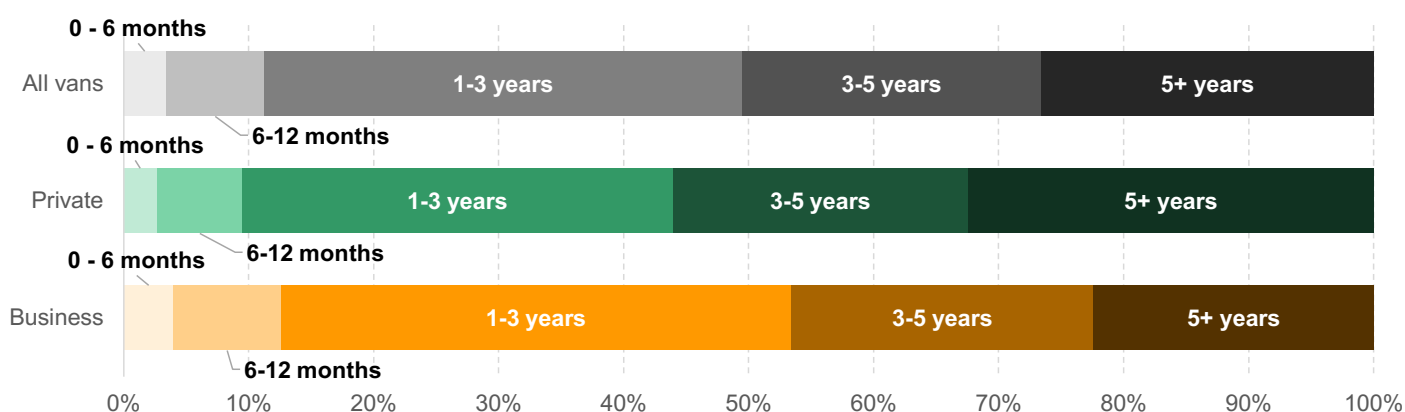
New vs Second-hand Van Average Annual Mileage by Keepership (Table: VAN0114)



The estimated average annual mileage (mileage per van) for all new vans in the survey was higher than that of second-hand vans (17,800 and 10,000 miles, respectively). The average annual mileage for vans purchased by a hire purchase agreement at 18,400 miles was higher than those owned outright at 11,800 miles. New vans purchased by a hire purchase agreement had the highest average mileage at 20,100 miles.

Private vans showed less variation than business vans when comparing the average mileage between new and second-hand purchased vans. For business vans owned outright, the mileage of second-hand vans was 31% lower than new vans, whereas for private

When the Van Was Purchased by Keepership (Table: VAN0107)

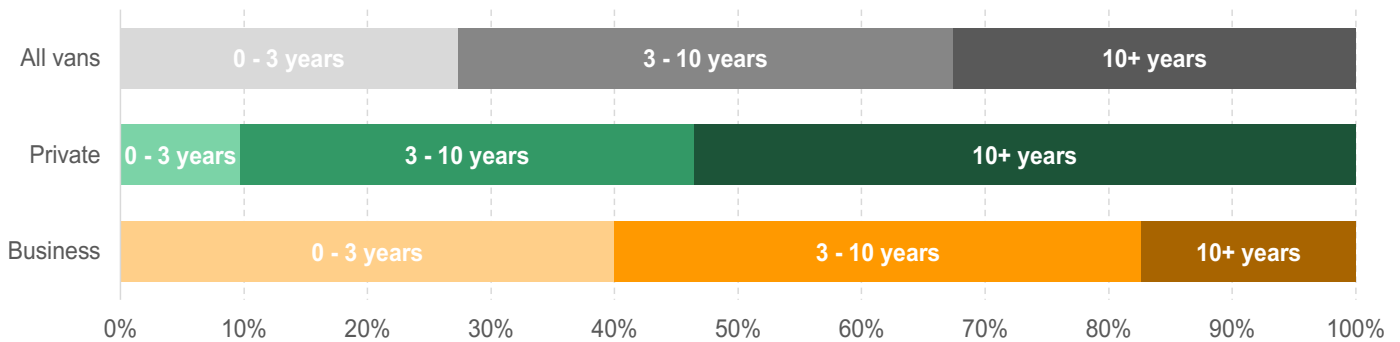


The survey results suggested that private van keepers were more likely to have purchased their van more than 5 years ago than business keepers. Around a third (32%) of privately kept vans were purchased more than 5 years ago, compared to less than a quarter of business kept vans (22%). For both private and business kept vans, at the time of survey, they were both most likely to have been purchased 1 to 3 years ago, with 34% of private and 41% of business kept van being purchased 1 to 3 years ago.



Van Age and Previous Vehicle

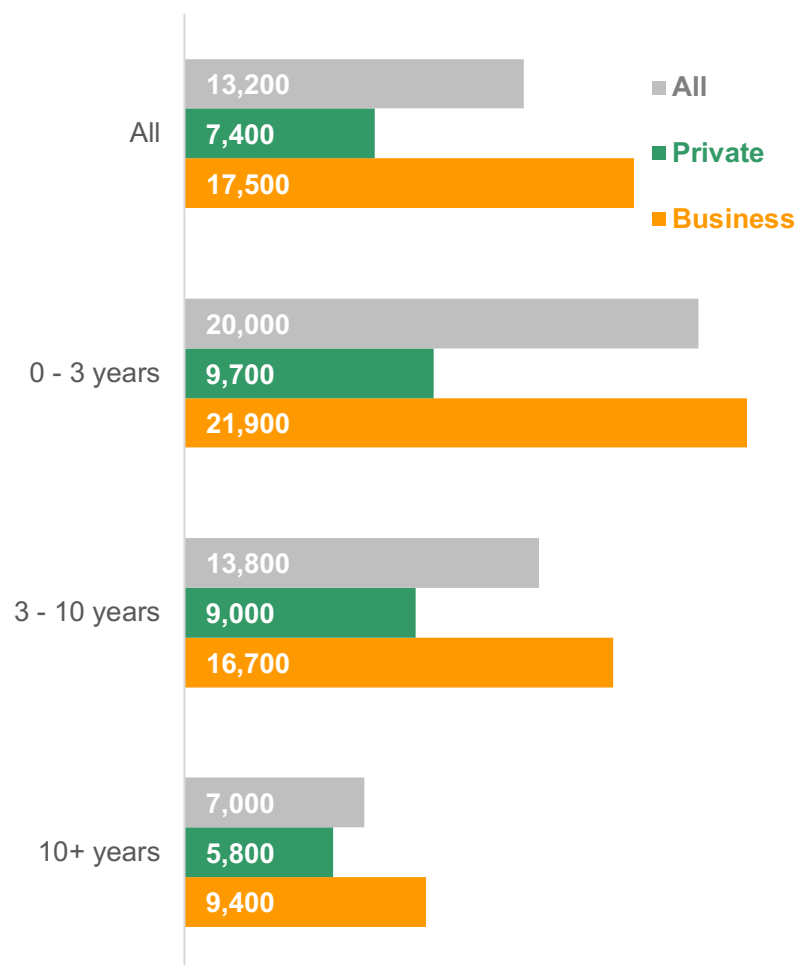
Proportion of Vans by Vehicle Age and Keepership (Table: VAN0105)



The 2019-20 van survey found that just over a quarter (27%) of vans were 3 years old or less, 4 out of 10 (40%) were between 3 years and 10 years old, and a third were over 10 years old (33%).

The survey indicated that the age of vans kept varies greatly between the private and business sector. Over half of vans (54%) driven by private keepers were more than 10 years old, compared to 17% by business keepers.

Average Annual Van Mileage by Vehicle age and Keepership (Table: VAN0115)



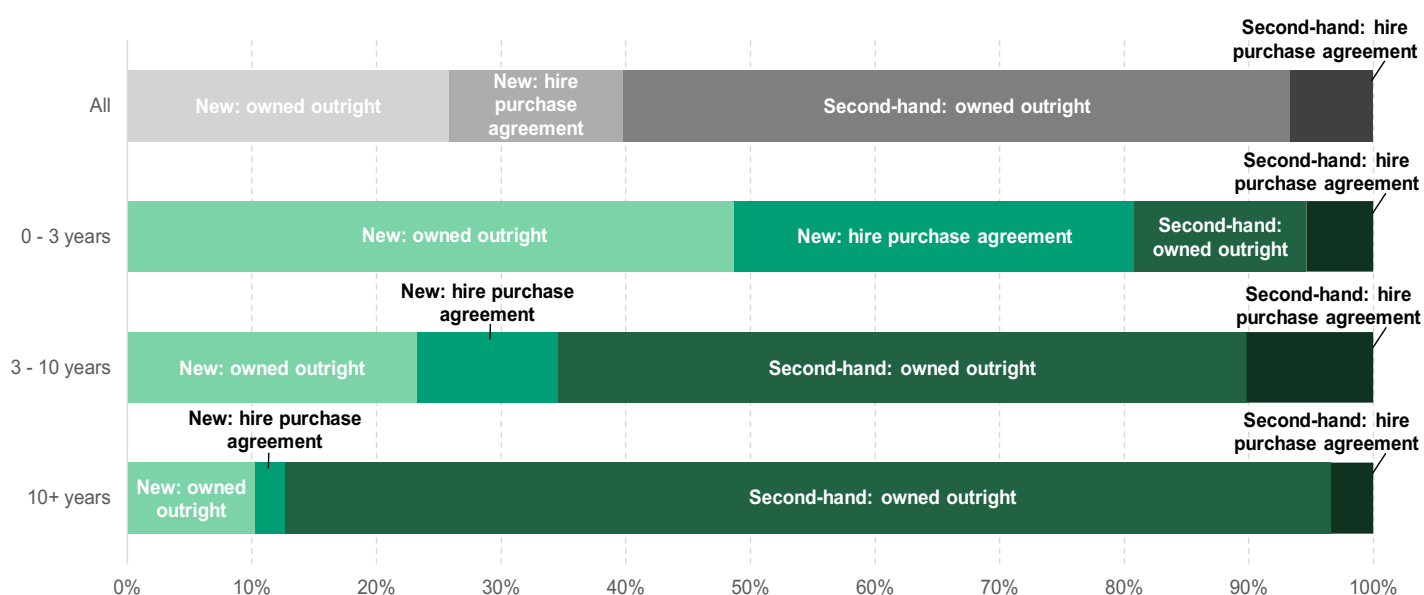
The survey found that the estimated average annual mileage of vans aged less than 3 years was the highest at 20,000 miles. The average mileage of vans declined with age, this correlates with vans aged over 10 years accounting for a smaller proportion of van mileage compared to van stock.

Average annual van mileage by age of van varied by keepership. Business vans had a higher average annual mileage than private vans at all vehicle ages.

The difference between the average annual mileage of vans aged less than 3 years and 3-10 years was much smaller for private vans than business vans. The average annual mileage of private vans aged 3-10 years was 7% lower than that of vans aged under 3 years. For business vans this was 31%.



Proportion of Vans by Vehicle Age and When the Van was Purchased (Table: VAN0106)



When looking at the age of vehicles and how they were purchased, the likelihood of a van being purchased second-hand or owned outright increased with van age. Vans aged over 10 years were most likely to be purchased second-hand and owned outright (84%). Vans aged under 3 years were the most likely to be purchased new (81%), with 49% purchased new: owned outright and 32% new: hire purchase agreement. Overall, the least likely purchasing method was second-hand: hire purchase agreement at 7%. Vans aged 3-10 years had the highest frequency of second-hand: hire purchase agreements at 10%, compared to 3% for vans over 10 years old and 5% for vans under 3 years old.

Previous Vehicle by Keepership (Table: VAN0108)

The majority of keepers (64%) stated that their previous vehicle was a similar type of van. However, business vans were more likely to have used similar vans prior to their current vehicles, with 79% of business van keepers stating this option, compared to 43% of private keepers.

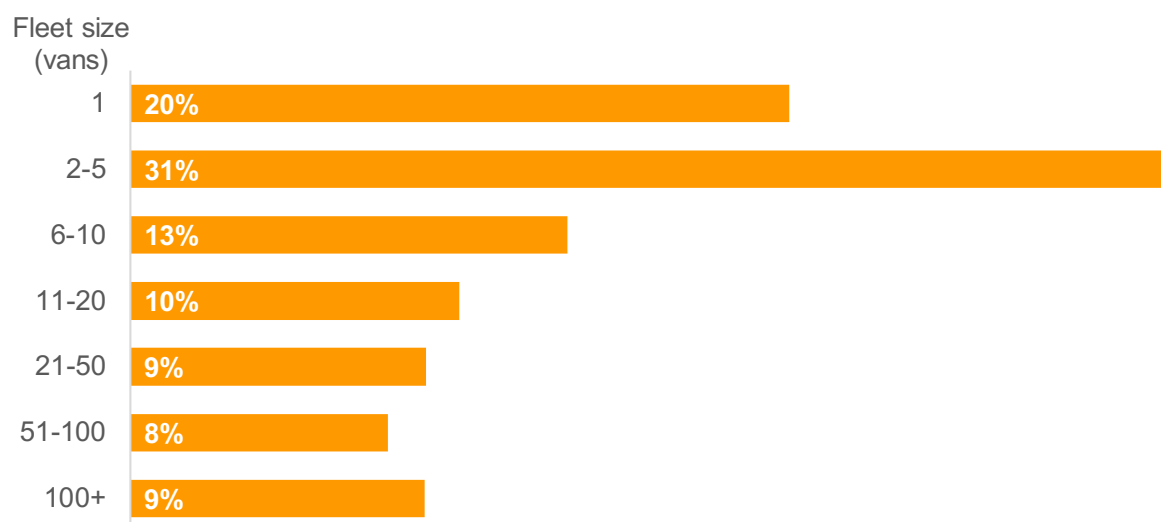
Across all van keepers, 17% had previously kept a smaller van or car; 8% had previously kept a larger van or lorry; and 10% of all responders didn't have a need before their current vehicle, meaning that this was their first van purchase. Private keepers, however, were more likely to not previously have had a need for a van in the past (17%), or had previously kept a car or smaller van (30%).



Van Fleets

Business van keepers were asked about the size and make up of their van fleet.

Size of Van Fleets (Table: VAN0109)



Around two thirds (65%) of van fleets contained up to 10 vans. Van fleets were most frequently made up of 2 to 5 vans (31%). Fleets over 100 vans accounted for 9% of vans and fleets of 51 to 100 vans were 8% of vans.

ULEVs in Van Fleets (Table: VAN0110)



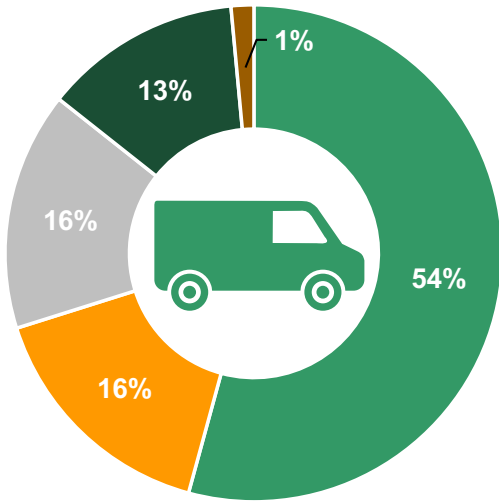
Participants were asked if any of the vans in their fleet were ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs). Larger fleets were found to be more likely to contain ULEV vans, with 31% of fleets with over 100 vans having at least one ULEV van. Although fleets of 2 to 5 were the most common fleet size, 2% of them contained at least one ULEV van.



Van Usage

This section provides estimates of the primary usage of vans.

Proportion of Vans by Primary Usage, 2019-20 (Table: VAN0201)



Carrying equipment, tools or materials

Delivery/collection of goods

Private/domestic non-business use

Recreational/leisure and holidays

Providing transport to others

Additional information and definitions

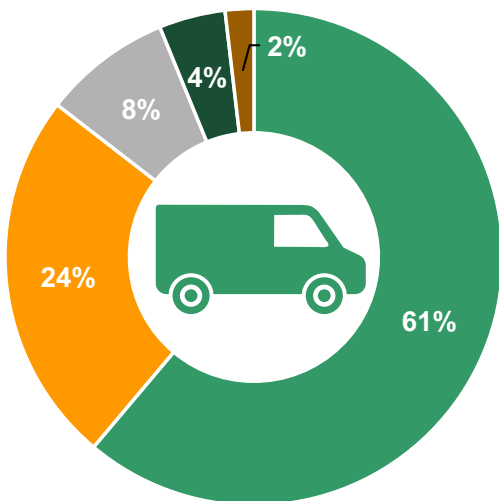
Primary use - What the van is used for the majority of the time that it is in use.

Where more than one primary use was selected in the survey, this response was classed as invalid. Overall 69% of surveys were returned with a valid primary use.

In the 2008 survey the 'Recreational/leisure and holidays' category was not included. This was introduced in the 2019-20 survey.

The survey showed that vans have a range of uses, Great Britain's van keepers in 2019-20 most frequently used licensed vans for 'carrying equipment, tools and materials' (54%), followed by 'delivery/collection of goods' (16%) and 'Private/domestic non-business use' (16%).

Proportion of Van Mileage by Primary Usage, 2019-20 (Table: VAN0211)



Carrying equipment, tools or materials

Delivery/collection of goods

Private/domestic non-business use

Recreational/leisure and holidays

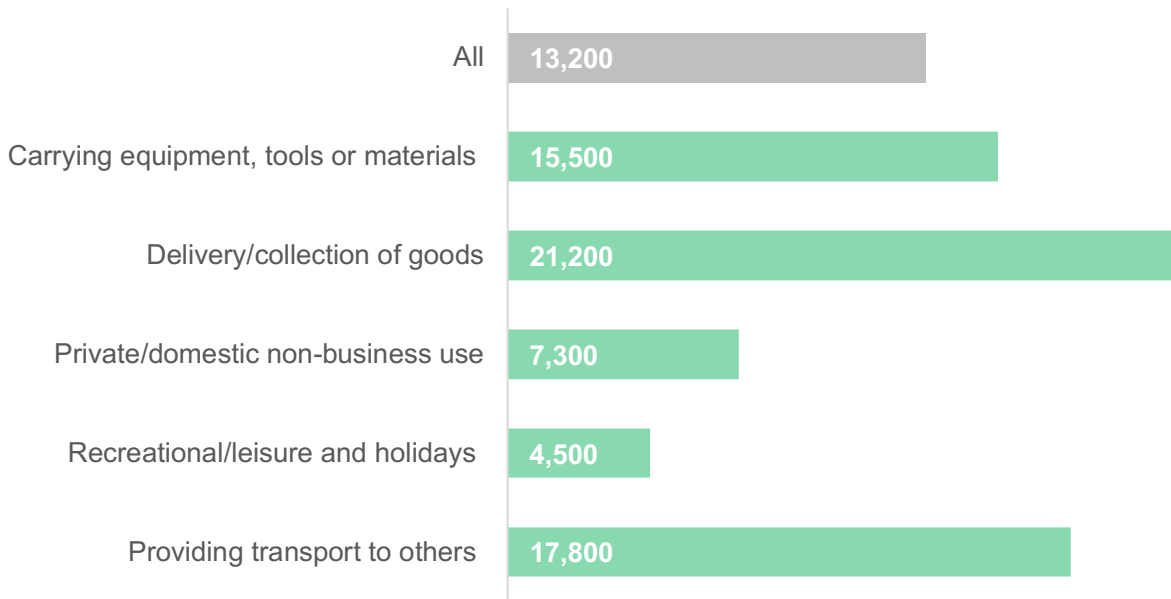
Providing transport to others

The primary usage which accounted for the greatest proportion of van mileage was 'carrying equipment, tools and materials' (61%), followed by 'delivery/collection of goods' (24%). Both of these proportions of mileage were higher than the proportion of van stock that they accounted for.



Van Mileage by Primary Usage

Average Annual Van Mileage by Primary Usage (Table: VAN0211)



The survey estimated that the average annual vehicle mileage of Great Britain's vans was 13,200. Although 'carrying equipment, tools or materials' accounted for the highest proportion of van mileage it had the third highest average annual mileage at 15,500. Vans used for 'delivery/collection of goods' had the highest average annual mileage at 21,200, followed by 'providing transport to others' at 17,800. The van usage with the lowest average annual mileage was 'recreational/leisure and holidays', this low mileage is reflected in this usage having a lower frequency of use compared to other primary usages.

Van Age by Primary Usage

Age of Vehicle by Primary Usage (Table: VAN0203)

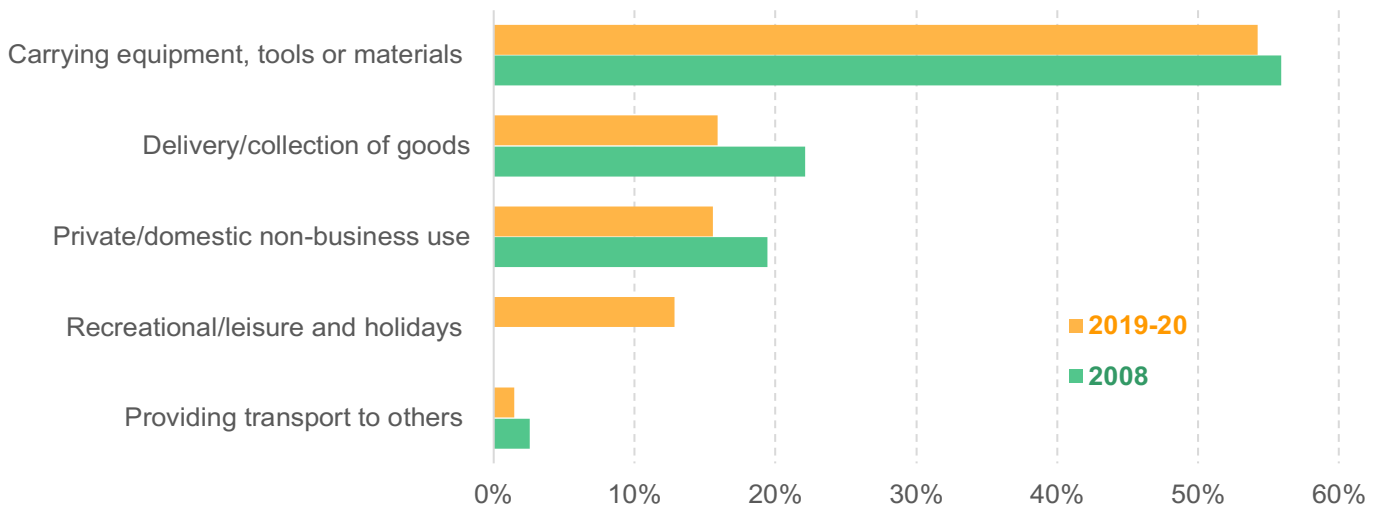
The primary usages of vans differed by the age of the van. Vans less than 3 years old were most likely to be used for 'carrying equipment, tools and materials' (67%). This primary usage was less frequent for vans aged 3-10 years and over 10 years (57% and 39%, respectively), but was still the most frequent usage. For vans aged less than 3 years and 3 to 10 years the second most frequent primary usage was 'delivery/collection of goods' (20% and 18% respectively), for vans aged over 10 years this was 'private/domestic non-business' (26%).

Half (50%) of vans aged over 10 years were used for either 'private/domestic non-business' or 'recreational/leisure and holidays', for vans aged 3-10 years this was 24% and for vans under 3 years this was 11%.



How Van Use Has Changed Since 2008

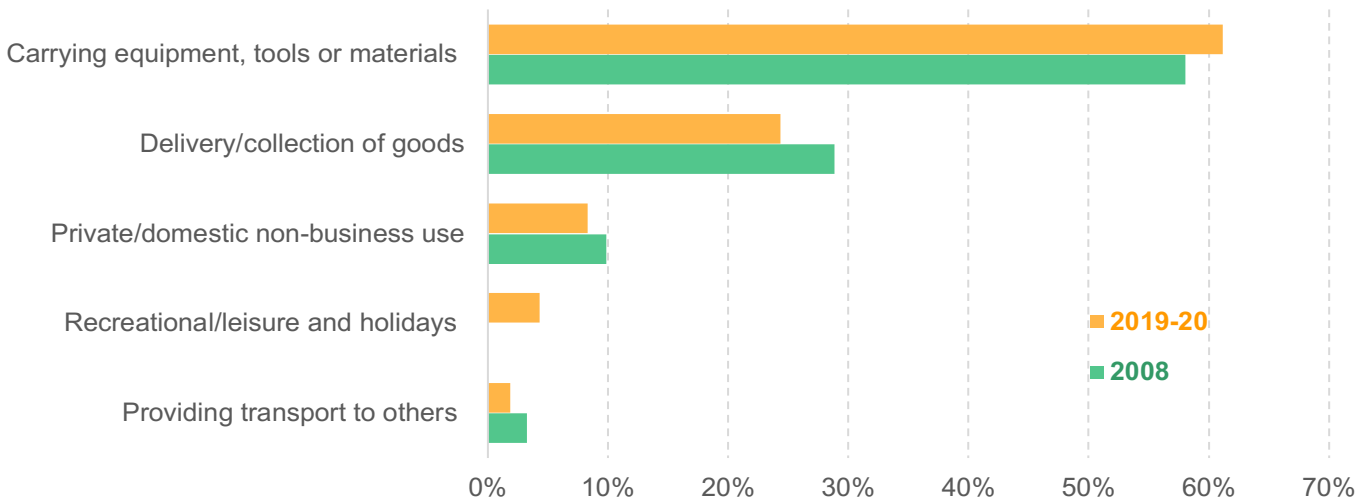
Primary Usage of Vans, 2008 and 2019-20 (Table: VAN0202)
(2008 figures cover England only)



The primary usage of vans in this survey have been compared to a similar England study in 2008. As there has been an increase in van stock, in volume terms all usages have increased since the 2008 study. When comparing as a share of all usages, ‘carrying equipment, tools and materials’ (54%) in 2019-20 was slightly lower than the 2008 figures for England (56%). In 2019-20 the proportion of vans used for ‘delivery or collection of goods’ (16%) was lower than in 2008 (22%).

The introduction of ‘Recreational/leisure and holidays’ in the 2019-20 survey limits the comparability of these figures.

Van Mileage by Primary Usage, 2008 and 2019-20 (Table: VAN0212)
(2008 figures cover England only)



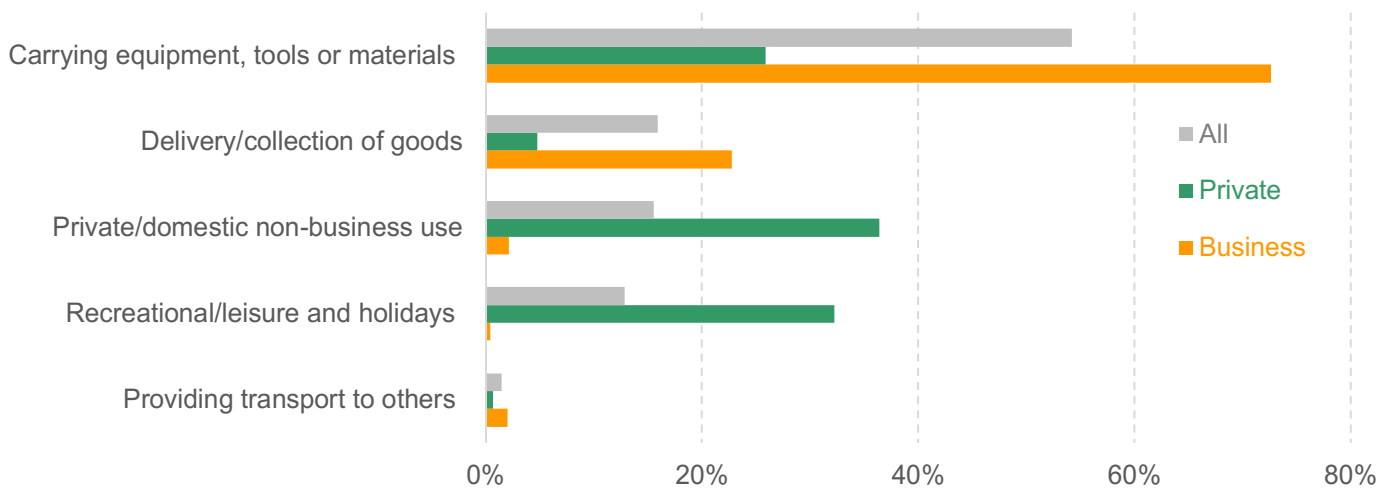
The 2019-20 figures for mileage by primary usage were broadly similar to the previous study of van keepership in England in 2008. In the 2008 study, 58% of mileage was attributed to ‘carrying equipment’, 29% to ‘delivery/collection’ and 10% to ‘private/domestic’ use.

The 2019-20 study saw the introduction of a new category – ‘recreational/leisure and holidays’, which made up 4% of all van mileage in 2019-20.



Primary Usage by Van Keepership

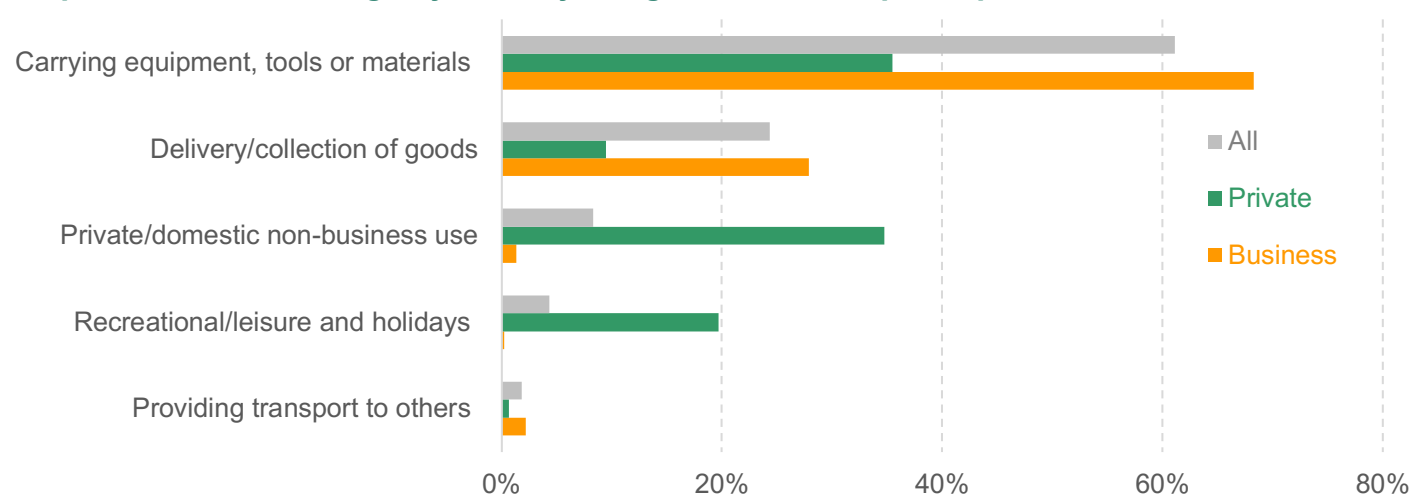
Proportion of Vans by Primary Usage and Van Keepership (Table: VAN0201)



The primary use of vans was found to differ by private and business keepers. Privately kept vans were found to most likely be used for ‘private/domestic non-business’ use (36%), followed by ‘recreational/leisure/holiday’ use (32%).

Business vans were most likely to have the primary usage of ‘carrying equipment, tools and materials to enable service provision’ (73%), followed by ‘delivery or collection of goods to other businesses or individuals’ (23%).

Proportion of Van Mileage by Primary Usage and Van Keepership (Table: VAN0211)



Van mileage also differed by whether the van has a private or business keeper.

Although only 26% of privately kept vans had a primary use of ‘carrying equipment, tools and materials to enable service provision’, this use accounted for the largest proportion of mileage (35%). This was followed closely by ‘private/domestic non-business’, which for privately kept vans also accounted for just over a third of annual mileage (35%).

The proportion of van mileage by primary use for business kept vans showed a similar distribution to that of the proportion of licensed vans by primary use. The largest proportion of mileage was used for ‘carrying equipment, tools and materials’ (68%), followed by ‘delivery or collection of goods’ (28%).



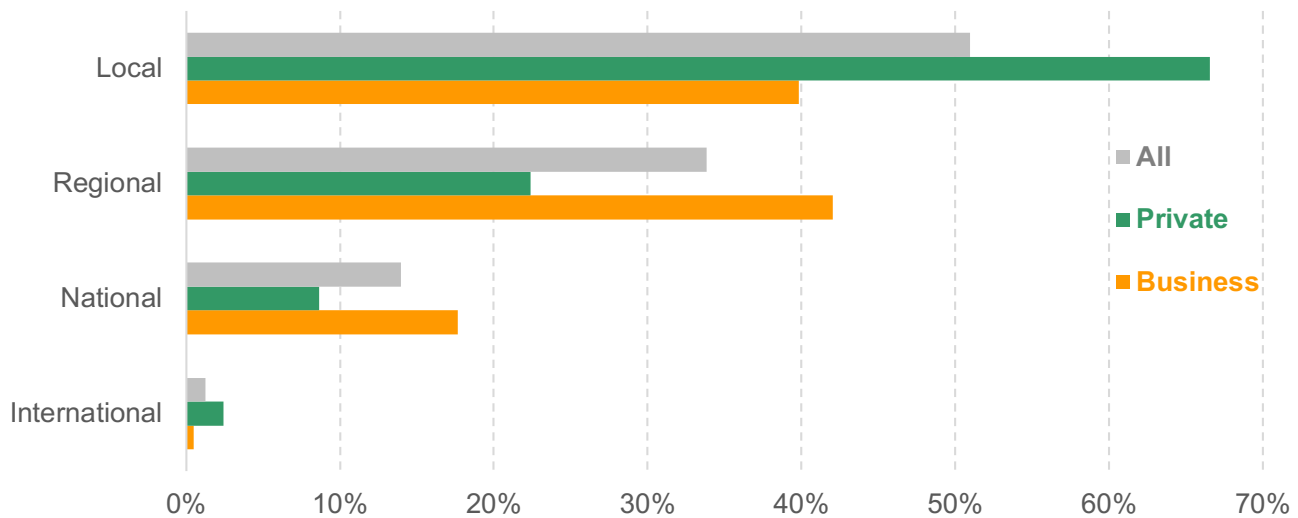
Where and When of Van Travel

This section discusses where and when van journeys take place.

Distance Travelled by Vans

The 2019-20 survey showed that half of all vans (51%) in Great Britain stayed local, within 15 miles of their base, on a typical day. Just over a third of vans travelled regionally (34%), 14% travelled nationally and 1% internationally on a typical day.

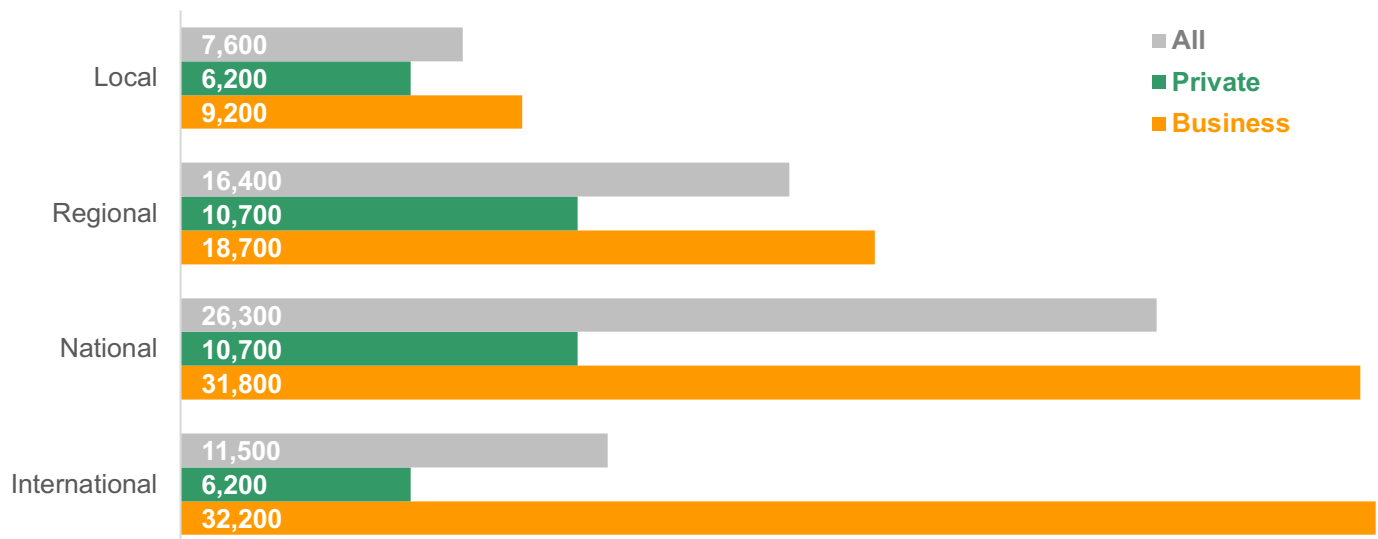
Proportion of Vans by Range of Typical Daily Van Journeys and Keepership (Table: VAN0301)



Private vans were more likely to stay local, with only 33% travelling further than 15 miles from their base on a typical day.

Business vans showed similar likelihoods of travelling either locally or regionally (40% and 42% respectively), but were twice as likely to travel nationally than private vans, with 18% of business vans travelling nationally on a typical day, compared to only 9% of private vans.

Average Annual Van Mileage by Range of Typical Daily Van Journeys and Keepership (Table: VAN0311)





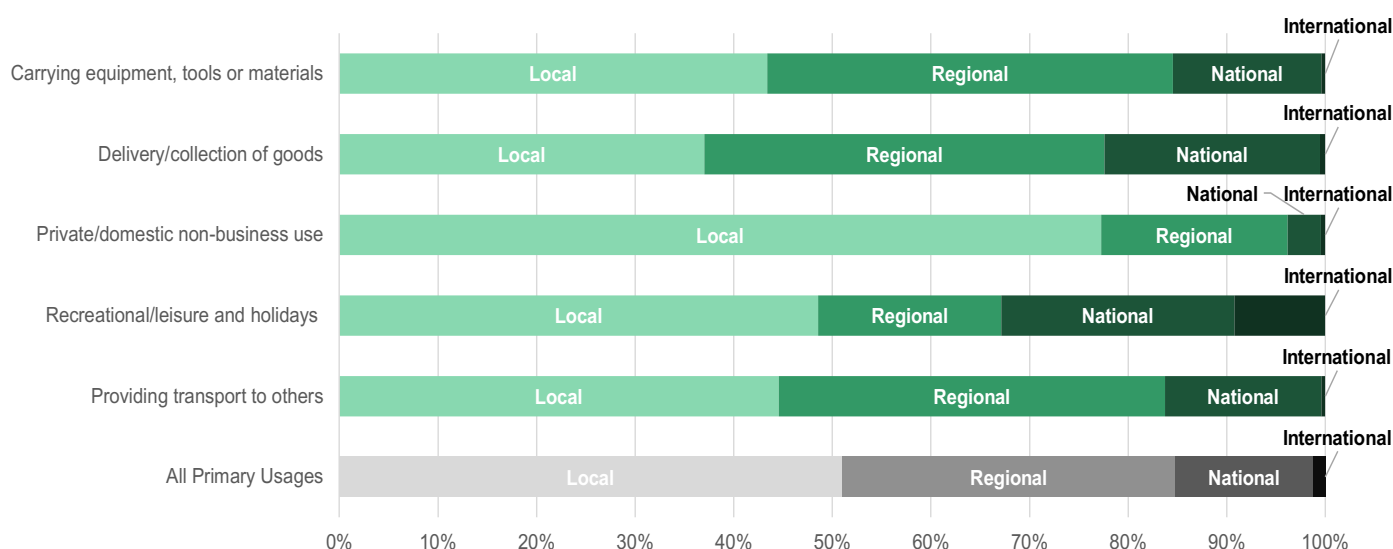
Vans travelling locally had the lowest average annual mileage overall, at 7,600. Vans which travelled nationally had the highest average mileage at 26,300.

Despite having the largest journey range, vans which were used for international travel had the second lowest average mileage at 11,500. Vans that were used for international travel were most frequently used for 'recreational/leisure and holidays', this primary use was also found to have the lowest level of frequent travel at any time of day.

The average mileage by journey range varied for private and business vans. The highest average mileage of private vans was for those that travelled regionally, at 10,700 miles. This was a similar level to those that travelled nationally. Private vans which travelled locally had the lowest average mileage at 6,200 miles, and this was the same average mileage as private vans travelling internationally.

Business vans which travelled internationally had the highest average annual mileage at 32,200 miles. For business vans the average annual mileage decreased as the range of journeys fell, with vans used locally having the smallest average mileage at 9,200 miles.

Range of Typical Daily Van Journeys by Primary Usage (Table: VAN0302)

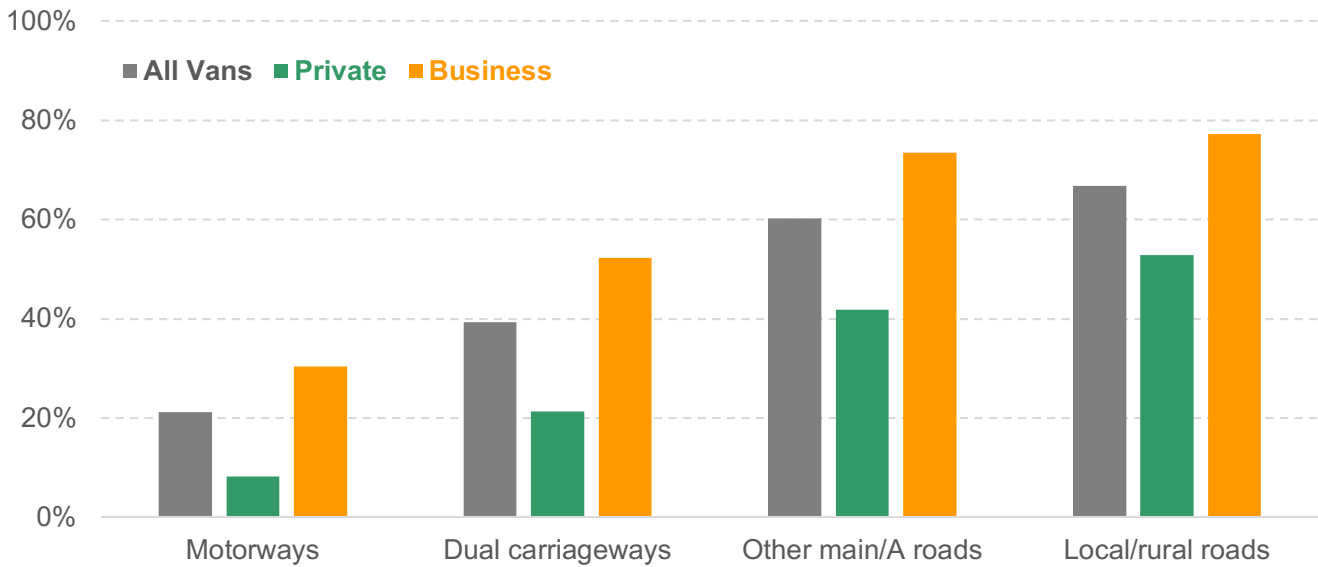


The survey results show that likelihood of a van travelling further than 15 miles from base on a typical day was dependent on the primary usage of the vehicle. Vans used primarily for 'private or domestic non-business' use were most likely to stay local (77%). Vans used primarily for 'providing transport to others', 'carrying equipment, tools or materials' or the 'delivery/collection of goods' tended to be used for travel further than 15 miles from base. The primary usage most likely to result in vans travelling further than 15 mile from base was 'delivery or collection of goods', with 63% of these vans travelling regionally or further on a typical day.



Types of Roads Frequently Used by Vans

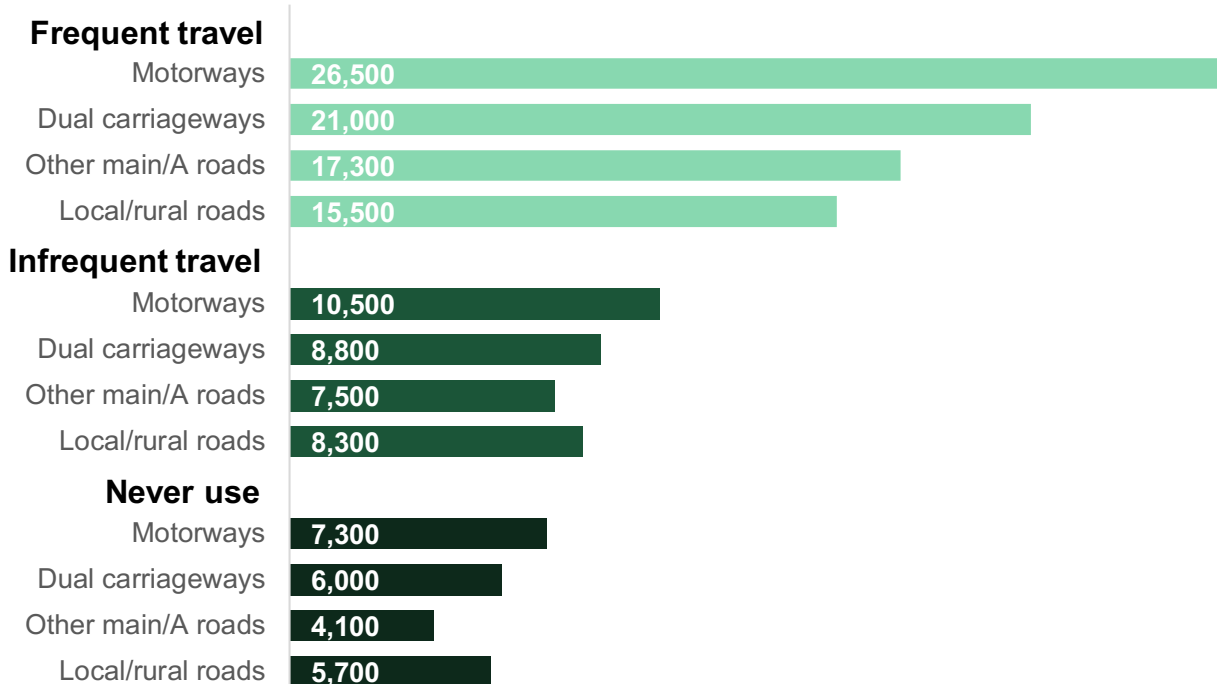
Frequent Van Usage (at least 4 days per week) by Road Type and Keepership (Table: VAN0303)



Findings indicate that over two thirds of vans (67%) travelled on local or rural roads regularly (4 or more days per week), with other main or 'A' roads also used regularly by 60% of vans. Fewer vans use dual carriageways and motorways regularly, with only 39% and 21% of vehicles using these roads 4 or more days per week, respectively.

Business vans were more likely to be used regularly on all types of roads when compared to privately kept vans. Only 8% of private vans were used regularly on motorways, with just over half (53%) used 4 or more days per week on local or rural roads.

Average Annual Van Mileage by Road Type (Table: VAN0313)





The estimated average annual mileage varied by which road types were used by vans and the frequency of their use. Vans which frequently (4 or more days a week) used any type of roads had a higher average annual mileage than those that infrequently used that road. Vans which frequently used motorways had the highest average annual mileage at 26,500. Where roads were used frequently, the average mileage declined as the road categories became increasingly local, with vans frequently using local roads having an average annual mileage of 15,500.

Vans which infrequently use motorways had a much lower average annual mileage than those that frequently used motorway (10,500 compared to 26,500). However, this was still the highest average mileage for vans that infrequently used any road type.

The average mileage of vans that infrequently use local roads (8,300) was higher than that of vans infrequently using 'A' roads (7,500). This was different to the pattern seen when these types of roads had been frequently used, with 'A' roads having a higher average mileage than local roads.

Frequent Van Usage (at least 4 days per week) by Road Type and Primary Usage (Table: VAN0304)

The survey showed that the types of roads frequently travelled on varied by primary usage. For all primary uses the most frequently used road type was local or rural roads. More than two thirds of vans were used frequently on other main or 'A' roads when used for 'carrying equipment, tools or materials', 'delivery/collection of goods' and 'providing transport for others'. These primary uses were also most likely to result in frequent use of dual carriageways, with around half of vans using these roads frequently.

Vans used for 'delivery/collection of goods' are most likely to use motorways frequently with 33% using these roads at least 4 days a week.

Despite being the most likely to travel national and internationally, vans used for 'recreational/leisure and holidays' were least likely to travel on motorways frequently at 1%. Of all van uses, vans used for 'recreational/leisure and holidays' were the least likely to frequently travel on any type of road, this is reflected in their frequency of use by time of day also.



Time of Day When Vans Travel

Regular (at least 4 times a week) travel proportion by Time of Day and Primary Usage (Table: VAN0305)



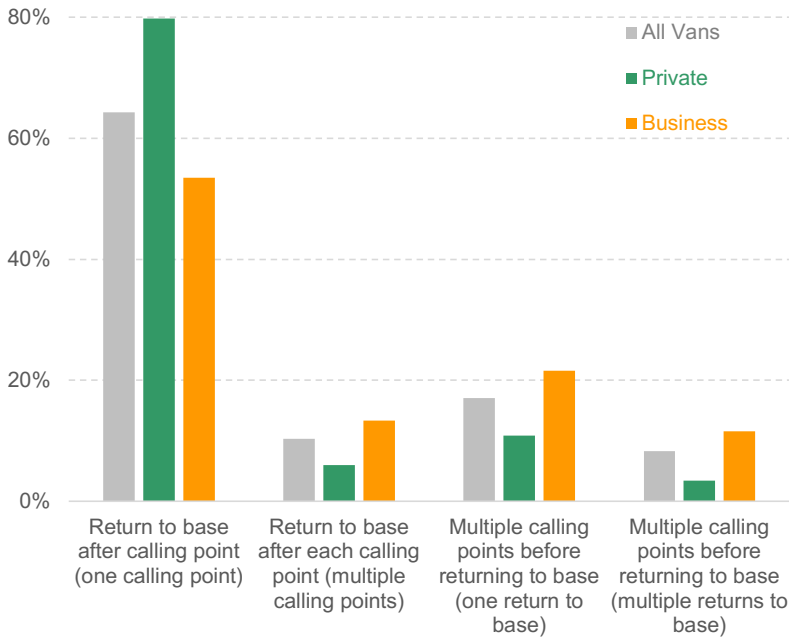
The usage of Great Britain's vans varied by time of day, vans travelled most frequently between the hours of 7am-10am (64%) and 4pm-7pm (57%). Overall vans were most likely to be used between the hours of 7am-7pm.

The time at which vans were frequently used also showed some variation by primary usage. Most primary uses showed similar patterns in the peak times of usage to that of all vans. Unlike most primary uses, vans used for 'delivery/collection of goods' showed peak usage at 7am-10am and 10am-4pm. Vans used for 'recreational/leisure and holidays' had the lowest levels of frequent use for each time period; vans used for this purpose were much less likely to be used frequently.



Van Travel Patterns

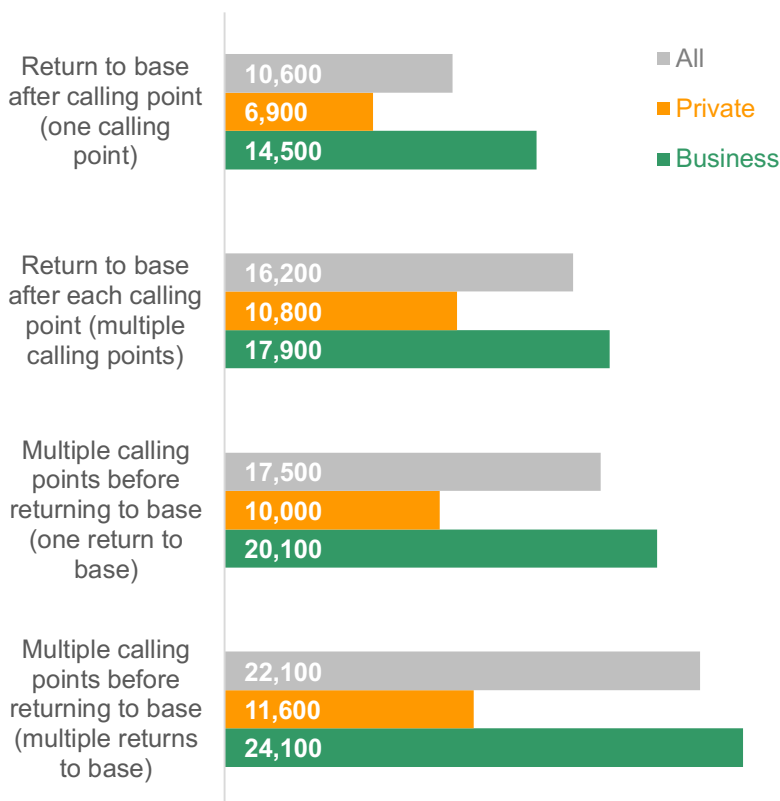
Proportion of Vans by Travel Patterns and Keepership (Table: VAN0306)



When assessing the travel patterns of vans, in a typical day most vans were likely to make one stop and return to their base (64%). The second most frequently used travel pattern was to have multiple stops throughout the day and only return once at the end of the day (17%).

The travel pattern of vans varied by keepership. Privately kept vans were more likely to have one calling point in a typical day before returning to base at 80%, compared to 53% of business vans. Business vans were more likely to make multiple stops or return to base multiple times a day than private vans.

Average Annual Van Mileage by Travel Patterns and Keepership (Table: VAN0316)



Overall, vans which typically only had one calling point in a day and returned to base had the lowest average annual mileage at 10,600 miles. The highest annual mileage was for those with multiple stops and multiple returns to base at 22,100 miles.

Average mileage by travel pattern varied by keepership. The average mileage for private vans was fairly similar for all travel patterns with multiple stops, whereas there was a greater level of variation in business van mileage.

For both private and business vans, those that typically had one calling point followed by a return to base had the lowest average annual mileage.



Van Travel Patterns by Primary Usage (Table: VAN0307)

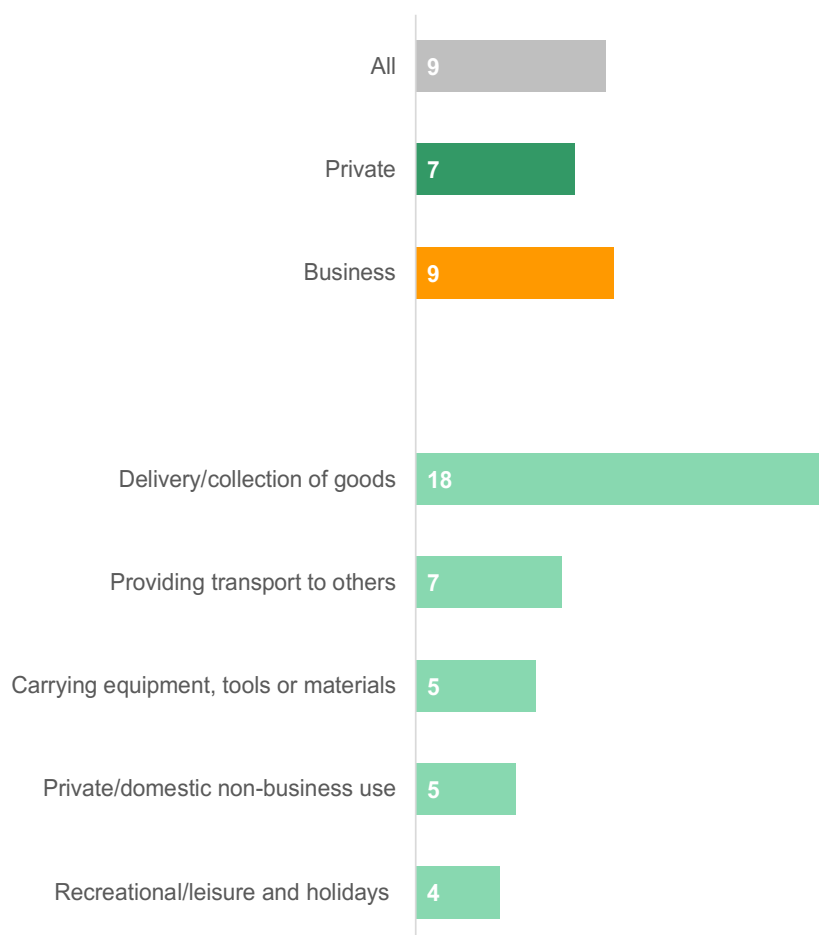
The travel patterns of vans was found to vary by primary usage. Vans used for 'private/domestic non-business use' and 'recreational/leisure and holidays' were the most likely to have only one calling point before returning to base (87% and 86% respectively).

Vans used for 'delivery/collection of goods' were the most likely to have multiple calling points in a typical day (60%). This included: 30% of vans which had multiple calling points and returned to base once, 20% of vans had multiple calling points and returned to base multiple times, and 11% of vans had multiple calling points and returned to base after each stop.

Van Travel Patterns by Range of Journey (Table: VAN0308)

The survey results showed some variation in the travel patterns of vans by the typical range of journeys. Vans with a single calling point followed by return to base were most likely to travel locally (57%). Vans with multiple calling points with either one or multiple returns to base were the most likely to travel nationally, both at 19%.

Average Number of Stops Made by Vans (Table: VAN0309)



For all vans in Great Britain, 9 stops was the average number for a typical 24 hour period. Business vans made 9 stops a day on average, compared to 7 for private vans.

Primary usage of the van was a key determining factor in the average number of stops. Vans used for 'delivery/collection of goods' had the highest average number of stops at 18. This was more than three times higher than any other usage. This usage also had the highest average annual mileage.

'Delivery/collection of goods' was the primary usage most likely to have a travel pattern which included multiple calling points (60%). This is reflected in it having both the highest average number of stops (18) and average annual mileage (21,200).



Regional Van Activity

This section discusses the regional variation in van activity.

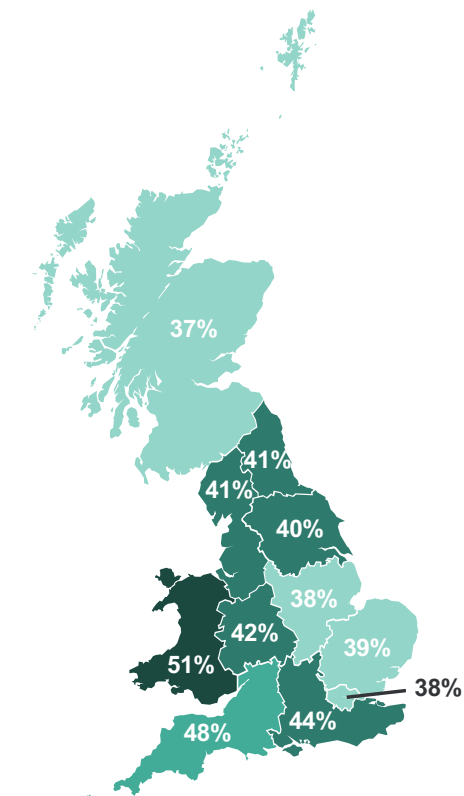
Van Registrations by Region (Source: Vehicle Licensing Statistics: 2019)

The number of vans varies by region, with the South East having the highest proportion of van stock at 17%, followed by the South West at 13%. The North East had the smallest proportion of vans at 4%, followed by London and Wales at 5% each.

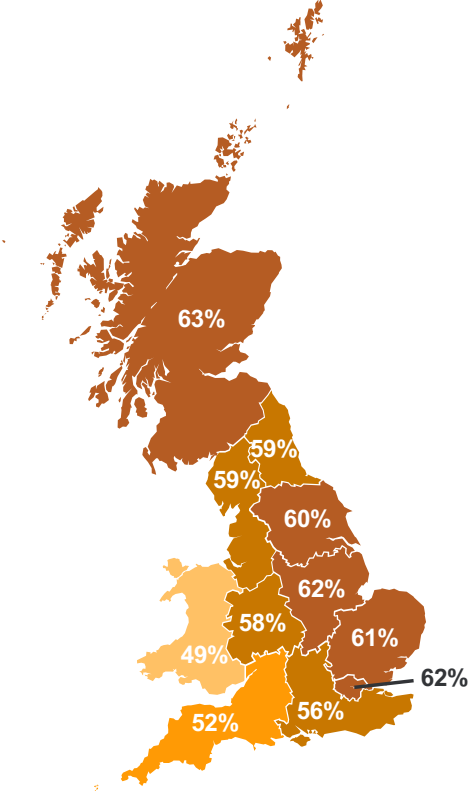
The proportion of vans by region may be linked to the regional population. The South East accounts for the largest proportion of both Great Britain’s vans (17%) and population at 14%. The North East accounts for the smallest proportion of vans (4%) and the population at 4%. The proportion of Great Britain’s vans in London does not seem to correlate with the population, accounting for 14% of the population but only 5% of vans.

Regional Proportion of Vans by Keepership (Table: VAN0401)

Private vans



Business vans

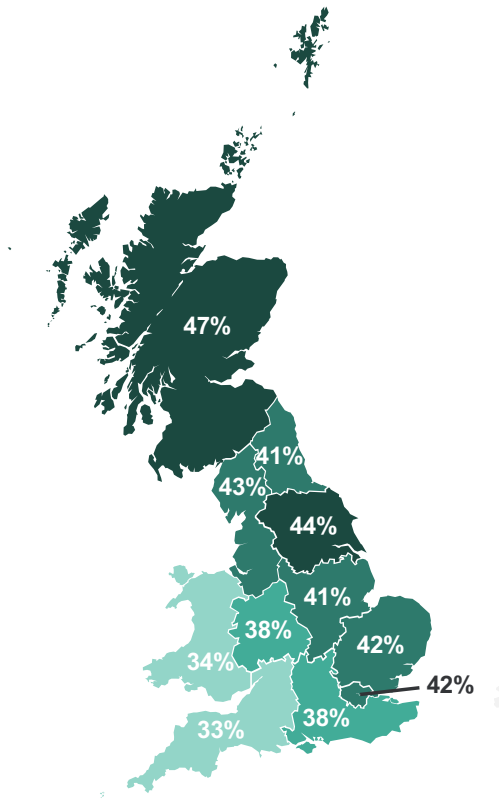


The proportion of private vans was lower than that of business vans in all regions but Wales. In Wales 51% of vans were kept by a private individual and 49% were kept by businesses. Scotland had the highest proportion of business kept vans at 63%, followed by London and East Midlands, both at 62%.

As the survey has shown differences in the activities of business and private vans, the regional variation in the proportions of business and private vans may explain some of the regional variation in activity.



Proportion Vans Purchased New by Region (Table: VAN0402)

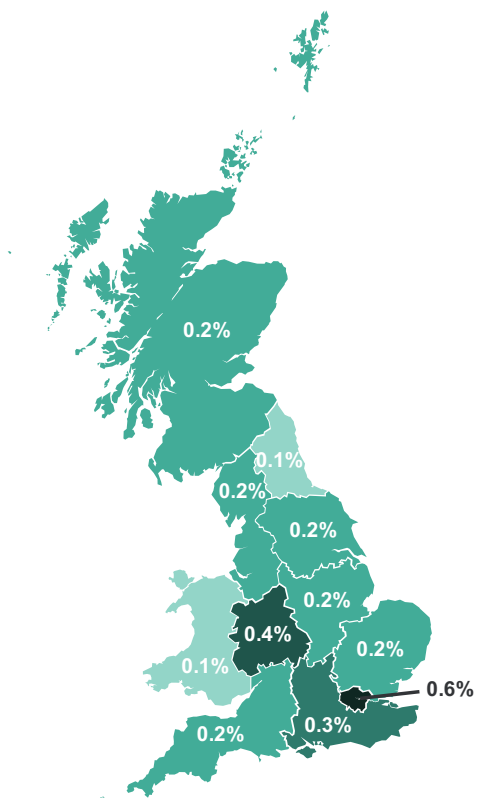


The proportion of vans that were purchased new varied by region. Scotland had the highest proportion of new vans at 47%, followed by Yorkshire and the Humber at 44%. The South West and Wales had the smallest proportions of new vans, at 33% and 34%, respectively.

The average annual mileage for new vans was found to be higher than that of second-hand vans. Wales and the South West had the lowest average annual mileage and the highest proportion of second-hand vans.

The age of the vehicle also impacted the average annual mileage, with older vans having lower mileage. Wales and the South West also had the highest proportion of vans over 10 years old (38% and 41%, respectively).

Proportion of ULEV Vans by Region



Source: Vehicle Licensing Statistics: 2019

The proportion of vans that are ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs) varied by region, but were consistently a small proportion of regional van stock.

London had the highest proportion of ULEV vans at 0.6%. London's ULEV vans accounted for 12% of ULEV vans in Great Britain but only 5% of all vans. The West Midlands had the second highest proportion of ULEV vans (0.4%) and accounted for 16% of ULEV vans in Great Britain, compared to 11% of all vans.

Wales had the smallest proportion of ULEV vans at 0.1%. Wales accounted for 3% of ULEV vans in Great Britain, compared to 5% of all vans.

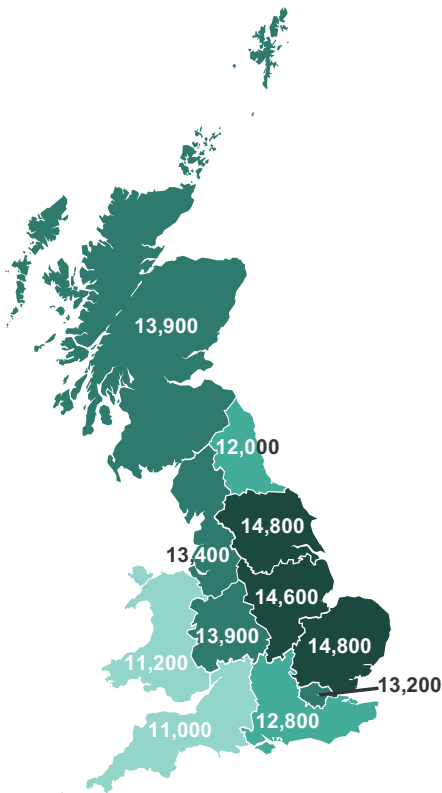


Primary Usage of Vans by Region (Table: VAN0404)

The primary usage of vans varied slightly by region. For all regions the most common primary usage was 'carrying equipment, tools and materials', London and East Midlands had the highest proportion of vans with this primary usage (60%), Wales had the smallest proportion of vans with this primary usage (46%).

The average annual van mileage varies by primary use, therefore the variation in the primary uses within regions may impact regional average annual van mileage. The primary uses with the lowest average mileage were 'recreational/leisure and holidays' and 'private/domestic non-business use'. Wales and the South West had the highest proportion of these two primary uses, with the total proportion of vans with these primary uses at 37% and 35% respectively. These were also the regions with the lowest average annual mileage.

Average Annual Van Mileage by Region (Table: VAN0411)



The average annual van mileage varied by region. The east of England had the highest average mileage at 14,800, followed closely by Yorkshire and the Humber. The South West had the lowest annual mileage at 11,000, followed by Wales at 11,200.

As well as having the highest average mileage, vans based in the East of England and Yorkshire and the Humber were the least likely to travel locally (within 15 miles of their base), at 45% and 47% respectively. Wales was the region most likely to have vans which only travelled locally, at 58%. Vans in the South East and South West were the most likely to travel internationally, but this was still only 2% of vans.

Although there was some regional variation seen in journey ranges, this was small.

Types of Roads Used by Region (Table: VAN0406)

There was some variation in the frequency of road types used by region. The South West and Wales were the least likely to frequently use motorways or dual carriageways, these were also the regions with the lowest average annual mileage.

The frequency of travel by road type may partly be due to the road infrastructure in the region. The North West has the highest proportion of major roads which were motorways in 2019 at 14%, and vans from the region were the most likely to travel on motorways frequently (30%).



ULEVs and Environmental Considerations

Additional information and definitions

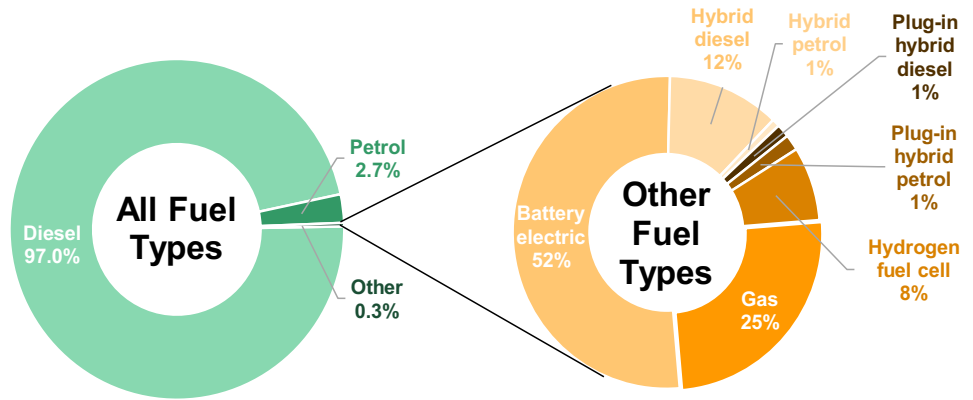
Ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs)

Vehicles that emit less than 75g of carbon dioxide (CO₂) from the tailpipe for every kilometre travelled. In practice, the term typically refers to battery electric, plug-in hybrid electric and fuel cell electric vehicles.

Van Fuel Types

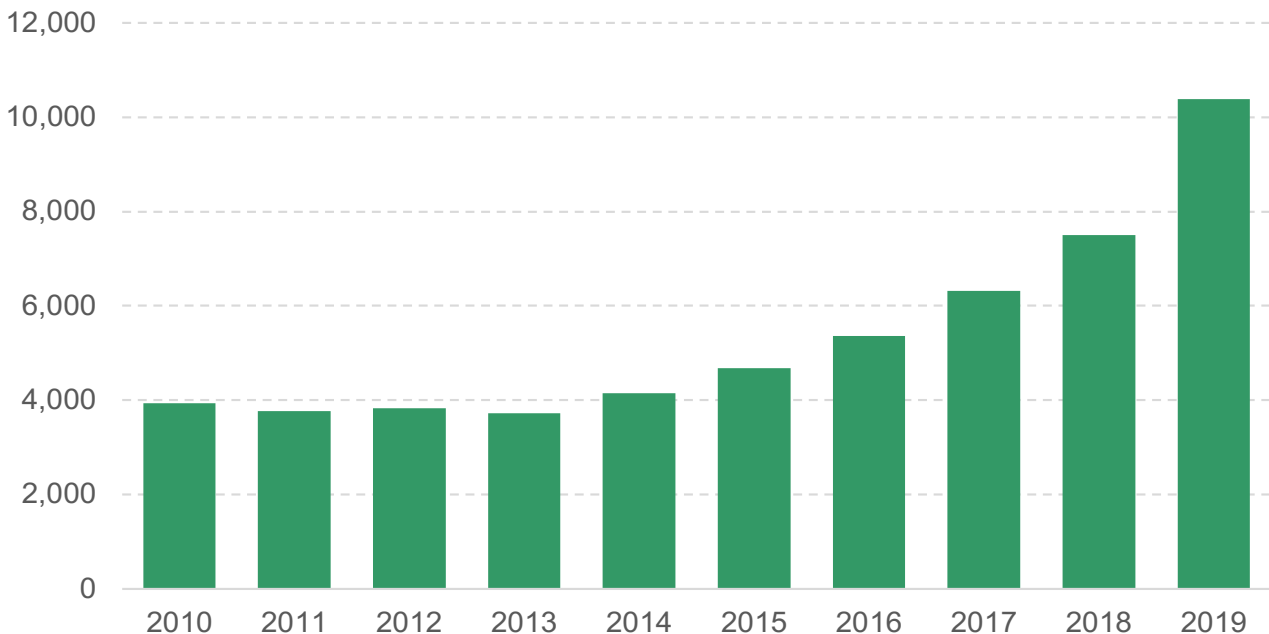
Road transport in Great Britain is a major contributor to carbon dioxide and nitrogen oxide emissions. This section discusses the small proportion of vans that are ultra low emission vehicles (ULEVs).

Proportion of Vans by Fuel Type (Table: VAN0502)



In the 2019-20 van survey, nearly all vans were powered by diesel (97%). Of the 'other' fuel types (not petrol or diesel), battery electric was the most common fuel. The proportion of the vans that were classed as ultra low carbon emitting in the survey was 0.2%.

Number of ULEV licensed vans in Great Britain, 2010 to 2019



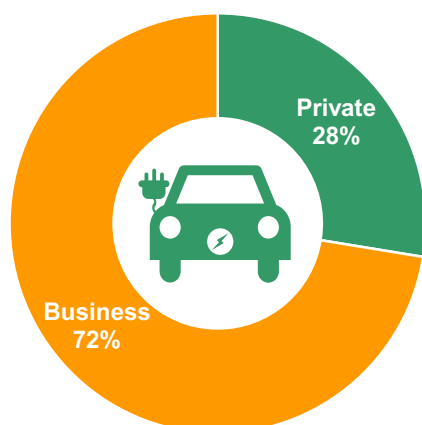
Source: Vehicle Licensing Statistics: 2019

Although the proportion of vans that are ULEV is low, the number of licensed ULEV vans is increasing. At the end of 2019, DfT Statistics show that there were 10.4 thousand ULEV vans, compared to 3.9 thousand in 2010.



Keepers of ULEV Vans

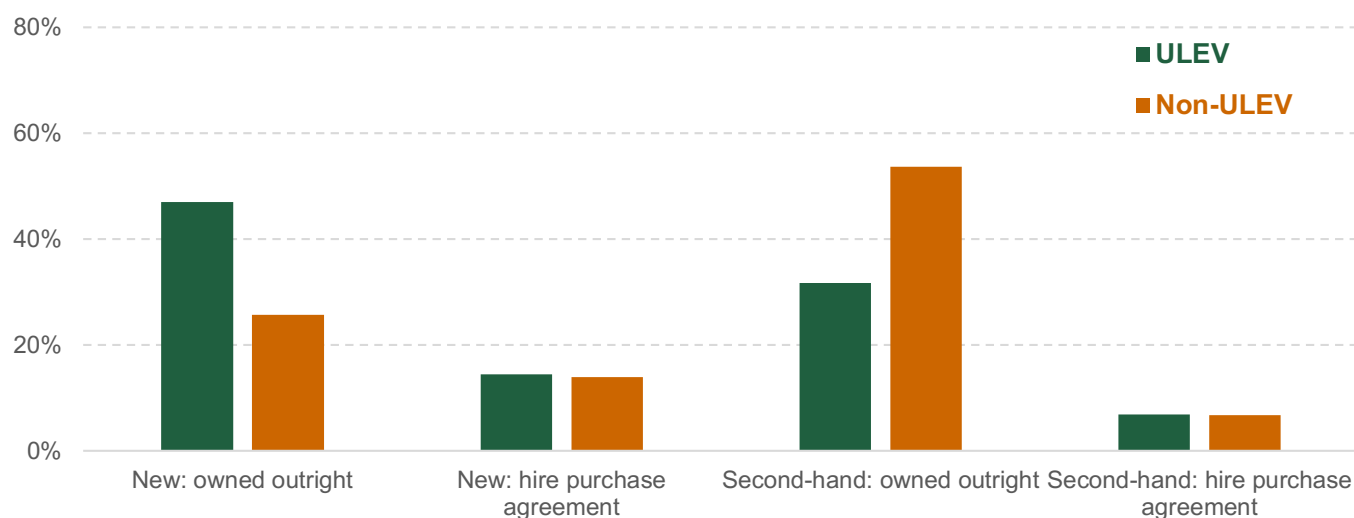
ULEV vans by Keepership (Table: VAN0501)



The survey found that around 28% of ULEV vans have private keepers and 72% are kept by businesses. A greater proportion (42%) of all vans (of all fuel types) are kept by a private individual, than that of ULEV vans alone. This indicates that ULEV vans are more likely to be kept by businesses than private individuals. However, the proportion of ULEV vans for both private and business keepers is small (0.1% and 0.3% respectively).

How ULEV Vans are Purchased

ULEV Vans by Purchasing Method (Table: VAN0503)



Higher carbon-emitting vans (non-ULEV) were more likely than their ultra low emission counterparts to be second-hand. New purchases accounted for 61% of ULEV vans, compared to 40% of non-ULEV vans. ULEV and non-ULEV vans were equally as likely to be owned outright, both at 79%, with the remaining 21% of both types of vans purchased by a hire purchase agreement. Overall ULEV vans were most likely to be purchased new and owned outright and non-ULEV vans purchased second-hand and owned outright.



How ULEV Vans are Used

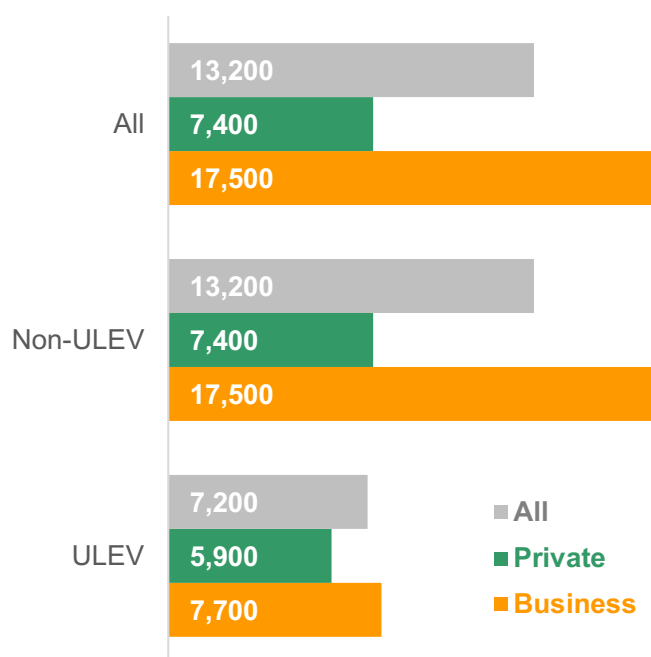
ULEV vans by Primary Usage (Table: VAN0504)



The most common primary usage of ULEV vans is 'carrying equipment, tools or materials' (59%) followed by 'delivery/collection of goods' (24%) and then 'private/domestic' use (16%). These three proportions are broadly similar to the primary usage of all van types. Less than 1% of ULEV vans were used for 'recreational/leisure and holidays', this is much lower than for all vans, at 13%.

Distance Travelled by ULEV Vans

Average Annual Mileage of ULEV vans by Keepership (Table: VAN0511)



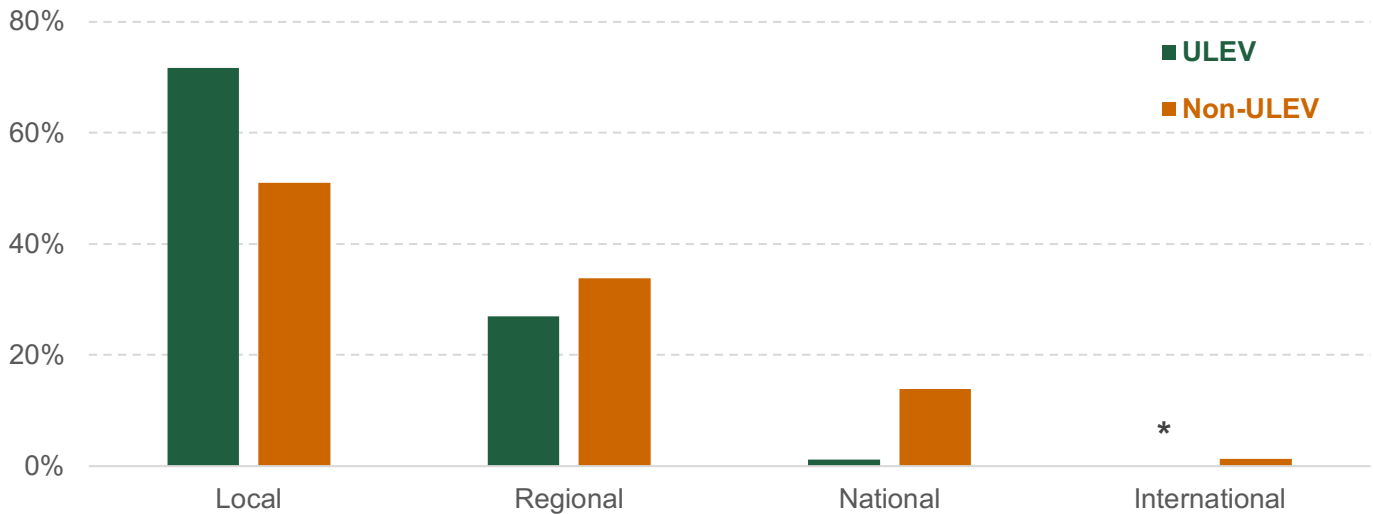
The average annual mileage of ULEV vans was found to be less than half of that of non-ULEV vans. ULEV vans had an estimated average annual mileage of 7,200, compared to 13,200 for non-ULEV vans.

The average annual mileage for both fuel types was different depending on whether the keeper was private or business. For private vans, the difference in average annual mileage between ULEV and non-ULEV vans was relatively small at 20%. The difference in average annual mileage for ULEV and non-ULEV business vans was 56%.



Journeys Made by ULEV Vans

Range of Van Journeys by Fuel Type (Table: VAN0505)

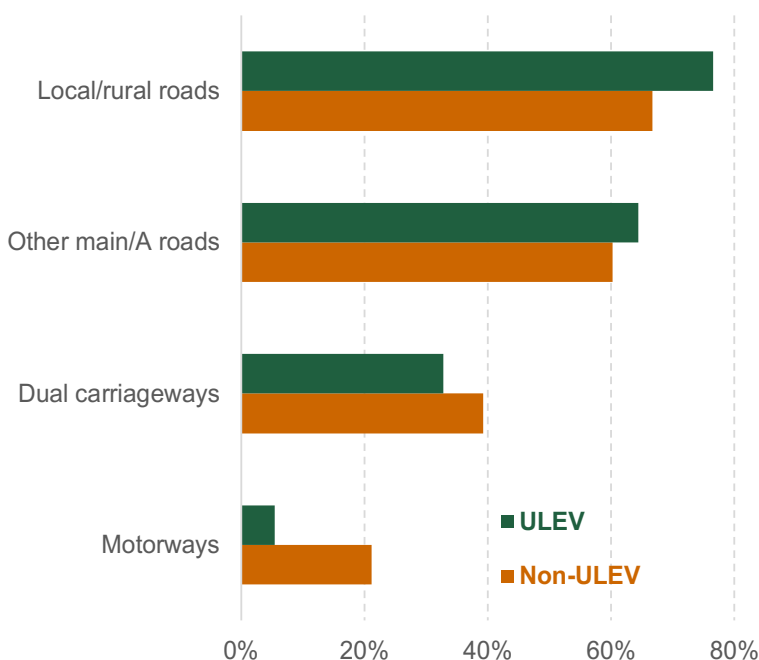


* numbers are suppressed where figures are based on less than 5 survey responses

ULEV vans were more likely to be used locally compared to non-ULEV vans. On a typical day, 72% of ULEV vans stayed local (within 15 miles of their base), compared to 51% of non-ULEV vehicles. Only 1% of ULEV vans travelled more than 50 miles away from their base (national or international) on a typical day, compared to 14% of non-ULEV vans.

Types of Roads Used by ULEV Vans

Frequent Road Use of ULEV Vans by Road Type (Table: VAN0515)



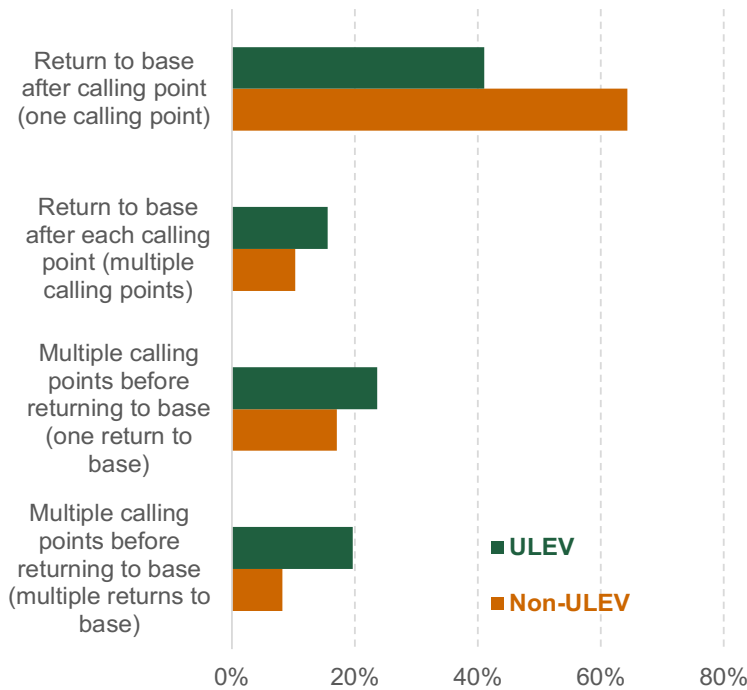
ULEV vans were found to be half as likely as non-ULEV vans to frequently travel (at least 4 days a week) on motorways, 12% and 24%, respectively. ULEV vans were slightly more likely to use all other road types than non-ULEV vans.

ULEV vans most frequently used local and rural roads (77%) and other main and 'A' roads (64%). These were also the most frequently used road type of non-ULEV vans, but a slightly smaller proportion of non-ULEV vans use them frequently.



Travel patterns of ULEV Vans

Typical Daily Travel Patterns of ULEV Vans (Table: VAN0507)



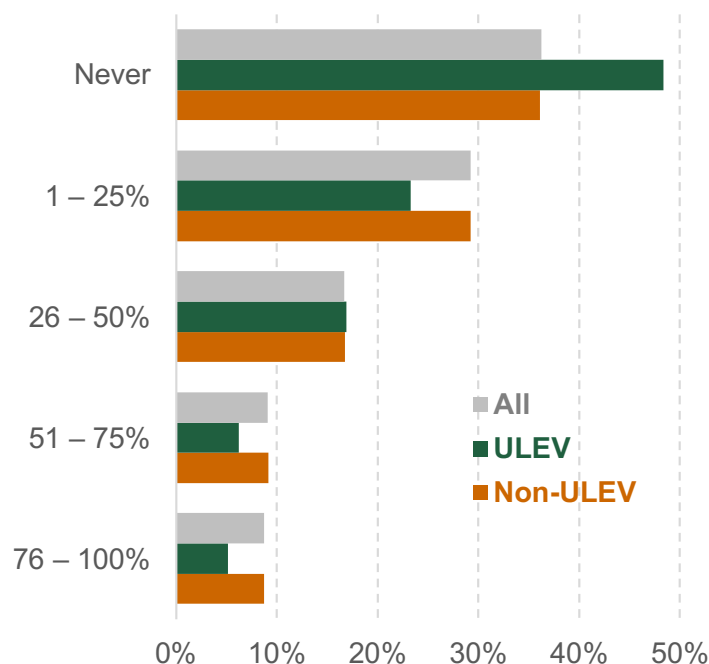
For both ULEV and non-ULEV vans the most common travel pattern was found to be a single calling point in a day followed by returning to base, but this was less frequent for ULEV (41%) than non-ULEV vans (64%).

Overall it was more common for ULEV vans to have multiple stops during a typical day, at 59% compared to 36% of non-ULEV vans. ULEV vans were also more likely to return to base multiple times a day (35% vs 19%), whether returning after each stop or routinely returning after multiple stops.

Not only were ULEV vans more likely to make multiple stops a day, on average they made more than three times the number of stops per day when compared to non-ULEV vans (25 and 8 stops on average per day respectively). This may be because 24% of ULEV vans primary uses were 'delivery/collection of goods' compared to 16% of non-ULEV vans, this primary usage had the highest average number of stops.

Efficiency of Van Journeys

Time spent of the road empty (Table: VAN0509)

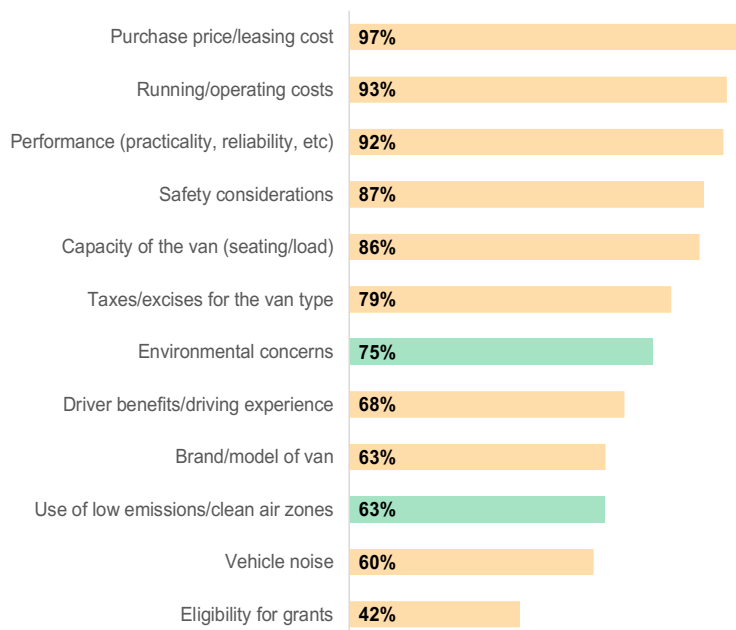


It is estimated that 36% of vans never spent time on the road empty. ULEV vans were slightly more likely to never run empty (48% compared to 36%).



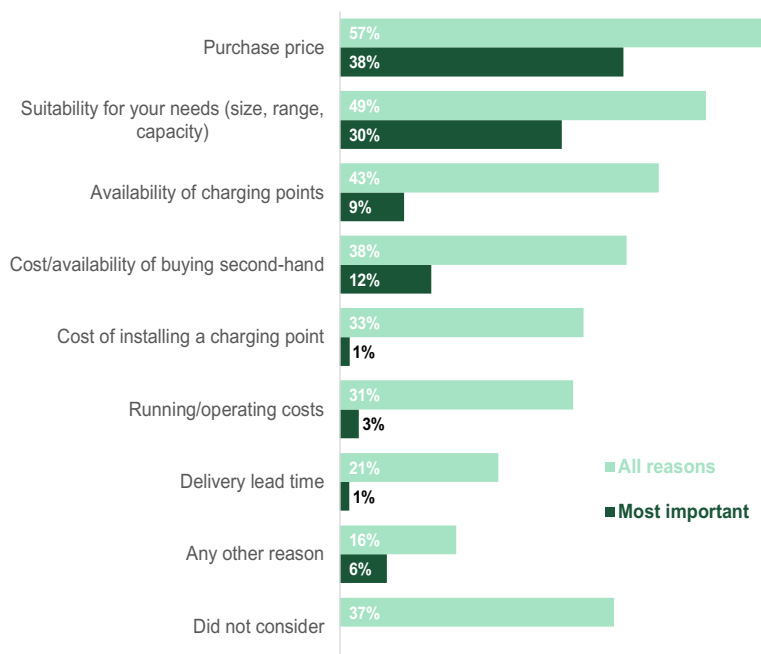
Factors Affecting ULEV Van Purchases

Importance of factors influencing the next purchasing decision (Table: VAN0601)



When considering factors that would influence the next van purchase, two environmental factors were listed in the van survey. The majority of respondents said these were either quite important or very important. However, in the overall order they were rated 7th and 10th most important, with 75% citing environmental concerns and 63% citing use of low emissions/clean air zones as important.

Perceived Barriers to Buying an ULEV (Table: VAN0602)



The 2019-20 van survey asked non-ULEV keepers for the reasons for not purchasing an ULEV van. Over a third of van keepers (37%) did not consider the purchase of an ULEV.

The most important reason for not purchasing an ULEV was purchase price. Of the perceived barriers to purchasing an ULEV van, over half (57%) claim purchase price, 49% stated vehicle suitability, 43% stated availability of charging points and 38% stated the cost/availability of purchasing one second-hand.

When asked how much they knew about grants for ULEVs, 16% of non-ULEV van keepers knew a little or a lot about grants for ULEVs, compared to 66% of ULEV van keepers.

Background Information

The Department for Transport commissioned statistical research into the van sector in 2019. This publication provides provisional findings based on interim data from this new survey.

Accompanying tables are available: www.gov.uk/government/collections/van-statistics

Factors affecting fieldwork

All of the survey responses included in this report were collected before coronavirus (COVID-19) restrictions began in Great Britain. The COVID-19 pandemic did cause some delays in data collection/validation which delayed the publication of the final report.

The final statistics are compiled from responses to a detailed questionnaire, employing data on over 19,900 vans driven by private and business keepers. The vehicles covered by the survey are vehicles registered in Great Britain as privately or company (business) kept, capable of carrying goods, not exceeding 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight in the light goods taxation class, and with van body types according to DVLA records.

Further guidance on the methodology, sample sizes, weighting, and strengths and limitations can be found in the Technical Report: www.gov.uk/guidance/van-statistics-information

Strengths and Limitations

- The fieldwork of the business questionnaires was shortened. The final reminder for completion of the questionnaire was not sent to business keepers.
- When allocating the version of the questionnaire (private/business), the definition of keeper was based on information held by the DVLA. When asked whether their van was private or business, there was a mis-match in some of this information. The definition of keeper used in this report is that which was declared in the survey. As the business questionnaire contained additional questions, some information would not have been collected for business keepers that received the private questionnaire.
- For each question contained within the questionnaire, there is a level of unknown where the participant has not disclosed information. We assume that there is no bias in the information that participants have not declared. The statistics presented throughout are based on those that gave a valid answer. The level of unknown varies for each question, but checks are made to ensure acceptable levels of declaration.
- The information in this report is dependant on the accuracy of the information provided by participants. Where a multiple choice question does not apply to the van an 'Other (write in)' option was available. As this information was a free text field, filled in by a small number of participants, there are limited conclusions that we can draw from this information.

Other data sources

The publication also includes National Statistics from other DfT and ONS statistics to provide context, including:

- Road Traffic Estimates 2019: www.gov.uk/government/collections/road-traffic-statistics
- Vehicle Licensing Statistics 2019: www.gov.uk/government/statistics/vehicle-licensing-statistics-2019
- Van Activity in England 2008: webarchive.nationalarchives.gov.uk/20110203090410/http://www.dft.gov.uk/pgr/statistics/datatablespublications/freight/goodsbyroad/roadfreightstatistics2008
- Mid-year population estimates 2019: <https://www.ons.gov.uk/peoplepopulationandcommunity/populationandmigration/populationestimates/datasets/>
- Road Length Statistics 2019: <https://www.gov.uk/government/statistical-data-sets/road-length-statistics-rdl>

The comparisons of the van statistics with these sources should be treated with some caution due to differing survey methodologies, collection methods, and geographic coverage.

Thank you

DfT is grateful for the input and helpful advice from Highways England and the Driver and Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA).

The survey fieldwork, data input, coding and some analysis were carried out by Watermelon Research Limited. Special thanks are due to the project team, the coders and to all the interviewers.

The help of the members of the public and businesses who gave their time to respond is gratefully acknowledged.

Official Statistics

Official Statistics are produced to high professional standards as per the Code of Practice for Official Statistics. They undergo quality assurance reviews to ensure they meet customer needs.

Details of ministers and officials who received pre-release access to these statistics up to 24 hours before release can be found in the pre-release access list:

www.gov.uk/government/collections/van-statistics



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