



Dawsongroup | vans

GUIDE

**REDUCING
YOUR
FLEET COSTS**

Introduction

As a fleet operator, you're going to want to keep your fleet running costs as minimal as possible. Whether this involves cutting operating costs or making the right choices to help minimise downtime and fuel consumption, it all helps to save your business money.

Have you considered the health of your fleet?

There are over 4 million vans on UK roads. However, poorly operated and maintained vans cost businesses millions of pounds. According to SMMT, out of the 10,800 vans stopped at the roadside each year: 63% of them have serious mechanical defects and 50% fail their MOT. Estimates by the Freight Transport Association state there are over one million unroadworthy vans on UK roads today. Roadside checks on vans are on the up and one quarter of these checks lead to some form of action, ranging from fines to prosecution.

The older a van gets, the more likely it is to have problems. According to the RAC Foundation, LCVs are being kept on average for around 10 years before being replaced. Dawsongroup | vans have a current age profile of 15 months, along with an average road side attendance time of 63 minutes and if your van needs to be taken in for repair – a replacement one will be given, keeping your business on the road and reducing downtime.



Driver Behaviour

Driver behaviour has a significant impact on vehicle fuel economy. Harsh acceleration, erratic speeds, hard braking and excessive air conditioning use are all driver habits, which according to the EPA can impact fuel efficiency by up to 33%. This can be corrected with driver training or monitored by telematics. Dawsontrac is a telematics system offered by Dawsongroup, which provides fleet operators with the access to track their drivers and their behaviour. GPS and other telematics reduce unnecessary mileage by providing improved routing and also discourage excess usage that can occur when the driver believes no one is watching. According to Fleet Financials, studies have shown that mileage reporting audits have an impact that results in mileage reductions — across a range of business, personal, and reimbursement mileage, without incurring a significant investment cost.

Rightsizing

Rightsizing is important to consider when choosing your van. It is inefficient and can even be unsafe to use a smaller vehicle than needed and vice versa – this is due to optimising the payload and maximising fuel consumption. The Corporate Vehicle Observatory suggests that van size migration is becoming a trend, with almost one in 5 companies changing the size of their vans in the past year. Time should be invested to consider if you are operating the best vans for your business activity. Only by methodically understanding business requirements, can fleet operators appropriately downsize vehicle models, downsize engines, and add suitable options while evading costs such as mechanical failure and downtime. At Dawsongroup | vans we have a range of Mercedes, Volkswagen, Ford and Vauxhall vehicles in a variety of sizes which can help save your business money.





Maintenance and Walkaround checks

Factoring maintenance into your fleet strategy is a key factor to avoid any need for callouts once on the road. Familiarise yourself and your drivers with our Dawsongroup | vans daily walkaround checklist to ensure your van is roadworthy.

Routine maintenance should be considered on top of this; engine, oil, water and tyre checks. Tyre checks are an essential activity for both safety reasons and fuel efficiency. Under inflated tyres can decrease fuel efficiency and tyre PSI should also be altered depending on the weight the vehicle is carrying. Incorrect tyre pressures lead to excessive tyre wear and damage which are all extra costs for your business.

Euro 6

If your vans travel into London, as of 8th April 2019, the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) comes into place and could cause your business to incur extra charges for entering the zone. Most vehicles including cars and vans will need to meet new, tighter exhaust emission standards (ULEZ standards) or pay a daily charge to travel within the area of the ULEZ. Vans included are: small vans (weighing up to and including 1.205 tonnes unladen weight) and larger vans, 4X4 light utility vehicles, motorised horseboxes, pickups (over 1.205 tonnes unladen weight up to and including 3.5 tonnes gross vehicle weight). By switching your vans to models which emit ULEZ emission standards, you could save up to £3262 in charges per van, per annum. As well as needing a ULEZ compliant vehicle to be allowed access into the zones, euro-6 vehicles will also save you money due to better efficiency.

Walkaround checklist



Battery

- Battery is secure and in correct position
- Battery isn't leaking



Washers and wipers

- Both front and back wipers move continually when switched on
- Wiper blades effectively clear the windscreen when the washer fluid is sprayed
- Washer fluid is topped up



Steering and horn

- Vehicle horn works when the control is used
- Steering wheel has no excessive play



Fluids, fuel and oil

- Brake fluid, engine oil, power steering fluid, engine coolant, washer fluid and water levels are all correct
- Fuel cap is fastened
- There are no leaks (check for puddles under the vehicle)



Lights

- Headlights and indicators work correctly
- Brake lights turn on when the foot brake is applied, and turn off again when released
- All dashboard warning lamps are working suitably



Mirrors and glass

- Both front and back wipers move continually when switched on
- Wiper blades effectively clear the windscreen when the washer fluid is sprayed
- Washer fluid is topped up



Seats and seatbelts

- Seatbelts are in good condition and function correctly when pulled tight
- Vehicles seats are secure



Bodywork and doors

- All doors shut properly and securely
- No body panels are damaged or at risk of falling off



Tyres and wheels

- Each tyre is inflated correctly
- No deep cuts in the side of the tyres
- No missing or insecure wheel-nuts

Failing to ensure your tyres are safe and legal can result in 3 penalty points on your driving license per tyre. The '20p test' is a quick and easy way to see if your tyre tread exceeds the minimum legal tread depth. Place a 20p coin into the main tread grooves of your tyre. If the outer band of the 20p coin is obscured when it is inserted, then your tread is above the legal limit.



Vehicle load

- Load is corrected secured
- Van doors have a working locking system
- Anything attached to a roof rack must be done so safely and strongly secured



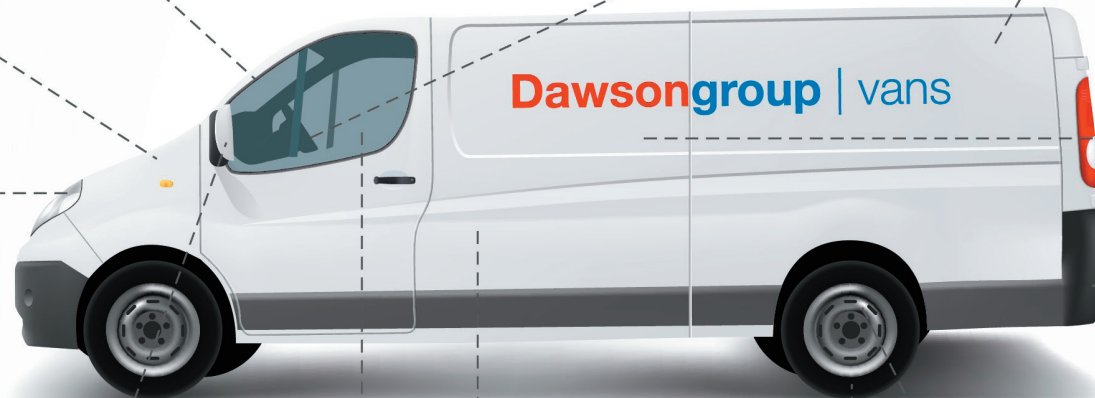
Exhaust

- The exhaust doesn't emit unwarranted amounts of smoke



Brakes

- Both your foot brake and parking brake are working correctly



Driver Mental Health

Stressed employees are 50% more likely to drive dangerously, as a fleet operator it is essential that you consider the stress and mental health of your drivers as part of their driver safety policy. There is a well-known stigma attached to discussing mental health at work. This stigma needs to be removed to create a culture in which anyone experiencing problems can ask for help in the knowledge that they will be supported. Venson Automotive Solutions state that “good mental health at work and good management go hand in hand and there is strong evidence that workplaces with high levels of mental well-being are more productive”. Research shows that employees suffering from high stress levels have lower engagement, are less productive and have higher absenteeism levels than those not working under excessive pressure, which are all costs to your business.





Benefits of Rental

Frequent vehicle replacement can be seen as an unnecessary cost, which can encourage fleet operators to keep their vehicles for a longer period of time. Keeping vehicles past their optimum life can lead to excessive maintenance costs as vehicles decrease in fuel economy, reduced utilisation and have mechanical issues.

Rental takes away the issues of servicing and maintaining assets. It gives you an instantly scalable business, removing the depreciation of an ageing asset and its impact on your brand. If you buy an asset from a manufacturer - their business model is selling that asset and ongoing spare parts, they have no interest in the ongoing service of your business. In contrast, a rental provider has a vested interest in reducing downtime, breakdowns and passing legislative compliance and accreditations like MOT's or emissions.

If you can't see the value and still perceive a premium in rental, then think of any premium as the best insurance policy you could have, as rental is so disposable, it not only covers you for a worst-case scenario, but also the best-case scenario of increased demand. This policy has no grey area in what you are covered for and the risk that it mitigates.

Successful businesses of all sizes now view the benefit of a usership rental model over ownership as a vital part of their methodology, and at Dawsongroup we are unrivalled in asset scope and rental service, to provide you with a secure future.

Remember, a rental decision you make today, you don't have to live with tomorrow.





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If you want to learn more about how we can help save your business money, get in touch with Dawsongroup | vans today!

Contact us on

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