

Right-sizing your fleet

Rarely-used and over-sized fleet vehicles are an unnecessary expense. It is therefore good practice to review the types of journeys that vehicles are being used for, and use this information to determine the optimum number and variety of vehicles required to meet the organisation's needs.

These pointers are likely to be useful for a smaller business. Larger organisations may want to contract a route-scheduling company to assign, route and track vehicles to build a full picture.

Fleet Downsizing (Journey profiling)

To identify under-used vehicles, collect or review data on journeys made in every vehicle over a period 30 days or more, including on:

- dates and times of journeys (usage pattern)
- start and end postcodes
- typical daily mileage
- why the journey is being undertaken.

From this information, it should be possible to see which vehicles are doing the fewest miles or if vehicles can be consolidated if they are being used for different time periods.

Vehicle Downsizing

Vehicles should be well-suited to the tasks and journeys they are being used for. An over-sized van will spend much of its life running well below its load capacity, resulting in unnecessarily high fuel costs and emissions. 'Downsizing' can be interpreted as reducing the vehicle size, engine size, its payload or its carbon emissions.

When looking to replace a vehicle, especially a van, think about:

- its role
- its maximum daily mileage
- how many, if any, passengers it carries
- storing heavy, bulky items and rarely needed parts, rather than always carrying them
- if route / job scheduling could allow for items to be delivered directly to site
- avoiding external storage such as roof racks, where possible, as these cause drag, which increases fuel consumption
- installing a well-designed or bespoke racking system – if this allows you to use a smaller van, the additional cost is quickly recovered
- the door options available as better access to the load space may mean a larger vehicle is not required.
- exactly what exact payload is required
- using daily-hire vehicles when the need arises, rather than operating a rarely used, large vehicle

As part of the review, it is worth considering if it would be beneficial to retain a pool vehicle or if a hire vehicle could be more cost-effective for occasional "non-standard" requirements, such as transporting larger loads.