

7. Transport



Moving food around the country – and indeed around the world – in a way that does not damage the environment is a huge challenge, but one that we must tackle.

Things you can do to make a difference

7a. Supply chain

- Introduce a no air-freight policy
- Explore green delivery options with suppliers
- Optimise deliveries to reduce unnecessary miles
- Explore options for locally-sourced, seasonal produce

7b. Fleet management

- Review and optimise your routes
- Invest in cargo bikes
- Upgrade your fleet of vehicles to electric

7a. Supply chain

Have you ever asked your suppliers how they get their produce and products to you?

What are they doing to minimise the environmental impact of their transport logistics?

Around 12% of the greenhouse gas emissions generated by food businesses comes directly from transportation¹⁹. Air freight is a particularly high impact method of moving food around – producing 100 times more carbon emissions than shipping. Indeed, just 1% of food transport in the UK is done by plane but it accounts for 11% of emissions²⁰.

Challenge your suppliers

Talk to your suppliers and challenge them if necessary on issues like:

- Whether or not they have a no air-freighted produce policy – if not, can they look at introducing one?
- Optimising the number and timing of deliveries (including consolidated deliveries with your neighbours)
- Explore options for sourcing seasonal fruit and vegetables more locally

- Upgrading delivery vehicles to reduce their impact (electric and hydrogen powered vehicles or even bicycles, which in congested cities like London make more sense than you might think).

Green logistics companies worth exploring with your suppliers...

Menzies Distribution – delivery service with the largest 100% electric vehicle (EV) fleet in London

WeGo Couriers – utilise ultra-low emission vehicles to provide same day and next day deliveries.

Green Courier – environmentally friendly courier service, that offers a carbon-balanced service.

CitySprint – zero-emission fleet includes pushbikes, cargo bikes, and electric and hydrogen vans.

Pedal Me – an on-demand and same-day cargo bike courier service for companies looking for a sustainable alternative to van delivery in central London.

Zedify – a zero-emissions courier service offering scheduled first and last mile deliveries for businesses.



7b. Fleet management

In addition to greenhouse gas production, the other negative impact of food transportation is local air pollution. Polluting vehicles account for around 50% of London's toxic nitrogen oxide (NOx) air emissions, and air pollution is estimated to cost the UK economy £20 billion every year.

Your food business may well have its own fleet of vehicles for picking up supplies and making deliveries. If that's the case, you're in an ideal position to make some changes that will reduce your carbon footprint and improve air quality.

Route review

A simple but effective place to start is to review your routes and make sure they are optimised. Could the timing or ordering of stop-offs be changed to maximise efficiency and reduce unnecessary miles?

If you have a number of vehicles in your fleet, it may be worth investing in specialist route optimisation software which incorporates GPS tracking on your vehicles.

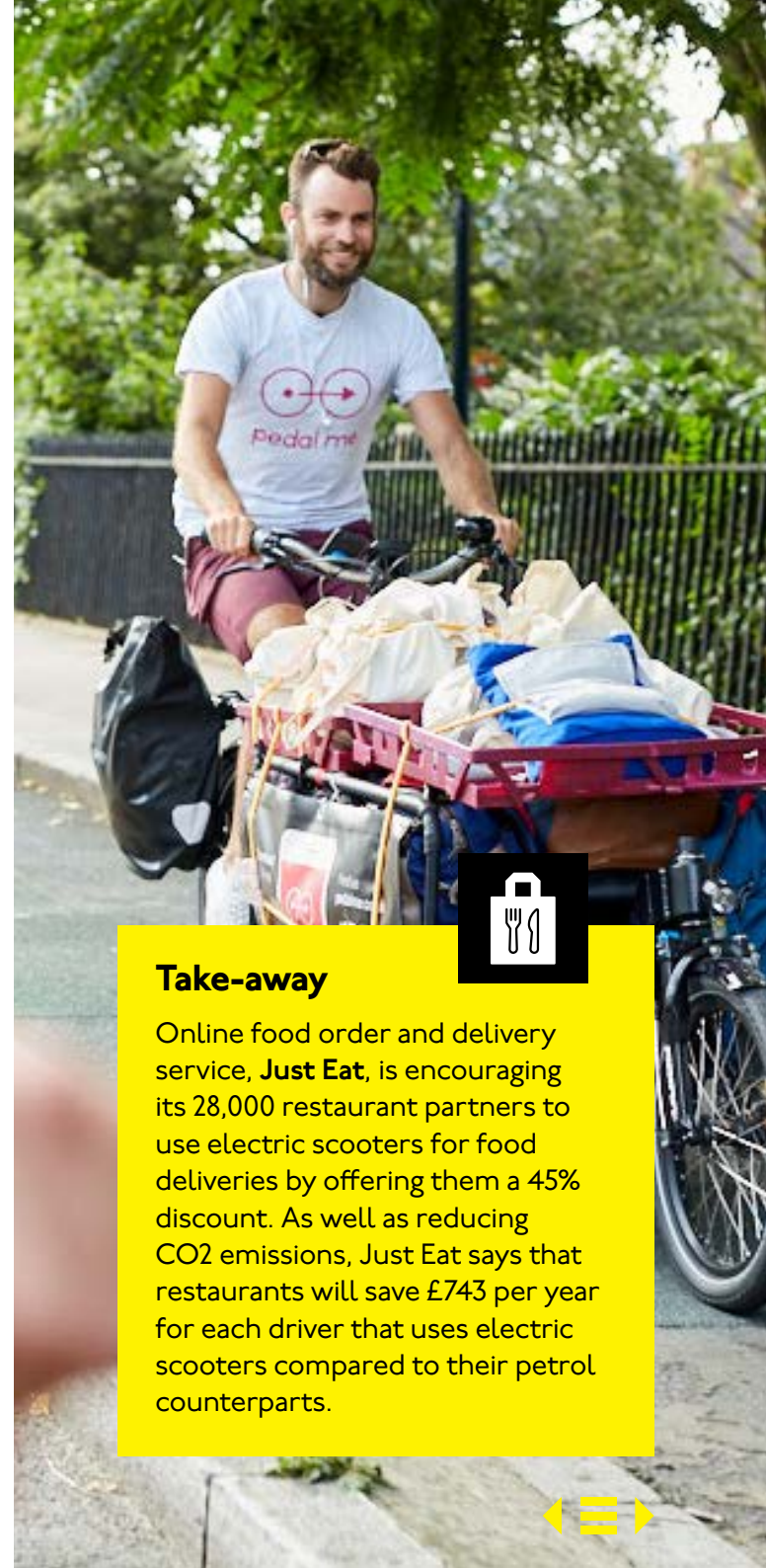
Green vehicles

Investing in 'green vehicles' is also an option, and it doesn't need to cost as much as you might think.

Cargo bikes are rapidly gaining in popularity, particularly in congested cities like London. These tandem-sized bicycles (where one of the seats is removed to make room for a storage box) are ideal for local deliveries. Unconcerned by parking tickets and able to use bike-only routes, cargo delivery riders can often deliver more packages in a day than their van-driving equivalent, even with the smaller payload requiring occasional returns to the depot.

The [Zero Emissions Network](#) offers businesses a two-week 'try before you buy' option on cargo bikes and grants of up to £2,000 for businesses who decide to take the plunge.

If cargo bikes aren't for you, then you could look into upgrading to electric or hydrogen vehicles. The Mayor of London operates a [scrappage scheme](#) to help improve London's toxic air. The scheme supports businesses with up to 50 employees, providing grants of up to £9,500 to replace vehicles that don't meet the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) standards with greener alternatives.



Take-away

Online food order and delivery service, **Just Eat**, is encouraging its 28,000 restaurant partners to use electric scooters for food deliveries by offering them a 45% discount. As well as reducing CO2 emissions, Just Eat says that restaurants will save £743 per year for each driver that uses electric scooters compared to their petrol counterparts.

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A few words on ReLondon's business transformation team

The business transformation team at ReLondon is an enthusiastic small team of people who are passionate about making the circular economy everyone's business!

Part of ReLondon, they help businesses across London to adopt more resource-efficient and resilient business models.

Since 2017, they have worked with more than 80 food businesses, helping them reduce their material and carbon footprint and handle resources in a circular way. Their work builds upon our other food waste reduction programmes aimed at businesses, citizens, community groups and schools. It also supports the findings of our flagship report on [London's food footprint](#). They are the proud winners of the IEMA Sustainability Impact Awards 2020 for best team at a small organisation.

reondon.gov.uk/business/

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