**SMMT NEW VAN REGISTRATIONS**  
4 September 2025 (data for August 2025)  
**Hi-res charts available via Dropbox:** <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fo/agw5bqcok8cwuht499hpl/ACtXTS5eDSMCfbMBhVCUD5c?rlkey=skui6cf3fcptrnvgg2egijfod&st=8oonoje0&dl=0>

**Electric van demand doubles as overall market shrinks again**

* New light commercial vehicle (LCV) market contraction continues with -13.3% decline in August.
* Demand doubles (109.5%) for battery electric vans (BEVs), pushing share to new high of 13.0%.
* Year-to-date BEV share rises to 9.1% but still far below mandated ambition of 16% for 2025, with steep ground to recover.

**Thursday 4 September, 2025** UK demand for new light commercial vehicles (LCVs) shrank by -13.3% in August with 14,365 new vans, pickups and 4x4s joining UK roads, according to the latest figures published today by the Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT). The contraction means volumes have fallen every month this year. August is generally the smallest-volume month ahead of ‘new plate’ September, and this month’s decline translated to 2,210 fewer registrations than last year and 111 less than the other pre-plate change month of February.1

Amid a tough economic environment, and weak business confidence, demand fell across every segment in August. Registrations of the largest vans declined -11.5% to 10,398 units – albeit still accounting for 72.4% of the overall market – while deliveries of medium-sized vans fell by -14.0% to 2,383 units. New pickup registrations saw the largest percentage drop, down -25.8% to 1,040 units, impacted by recent fiscal changes to reclassify double-cab pickups as cars for benefit-in-kind and capital allowance purposes since April. The lower-volume small van and 4x4 segments also declined, down -17.6% and -13.9% to 352 and 192 units respectively.

Reflecting their commitment to deliver government ambition, manufacturers continue to invest heavily in battery electric van (BEV) models, with over 40 options now available. The market is responding positively, with more than double (109.5%) registered compared with August last year2 – growth that pushed volumes to 1,902 units and market share to a new monthly record of 13.0%. While the overall market year to date is -11.4%,3 new BEV uptake has risen by 59.9% – to comprise 9.1% of the overall market. However, that share remains some distance below the 16% mandated target, highlighting the need to increase market confidence.

With the market now entering what is usually its second-busiest month of the year, operator confidence for September will be crucial for the industry. The extension of the Plug-in Van Grant, along with the Depot Charging Scheme, can help operators switch but achieving mandated levels requires a transition that is accessible to all new buyers – particularly those dependent on van-suitable charging infrastructure in public and on-street locations. Depots, meanwhile, which could face grid connection waits of up to 15 years,4 need planning priority like that afforded data centres and wind farms, enabling smooth and timelier road decarbonisation.

**Mike Hawes, SMMT Chief Executive**, said, “August is conventionally a low volume month for the new LCV market so while the continued decline is disappointing, the focus is on September to deliver the fleet investment and growth that would reflect a healthy business environment. A thriving market is also essential for decarbonisation, given the vast choice of electric van models already available to suit almost every need. Manufacturers need greater volumes to ensure investment in innovation continues unabated.”

**Notes to editors**

1 LCV registrations, February 2025: 14,476 units

2 New BEV registrations, August 2024: 908 units; SMMT’s BEV LCV registration data reflects the Vehicle Emissions Trading Scheme, in which BEVs weighing >3.5-4.25t contribute towards each manufacturer’s target, in addition to those weighing ≤3.5t

3 New LCV registrations January-August 2025: 193,846 units

4 [DESNZ, 15 April 2025](https://www.gov.uk/government/news/clean-energy-projects-prioritised-for-grid-connections)

**About SMMT and the UK automotive industry**

The Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders (SMMT) is one of the largest and most influential trade associations, representing the automotive industry in the UK.

The automotive industry is a vital part of the UK economy, integral to growth, the delivery of net zero and the UK as a global trade hub. It contributes £92 billion turnover and £25 billion value added to the UK economy and invested £5 billion in R&D, with 183,000 people employed directly in manufacturing and some 796,000 in total across the wider automotive industry. Many of these automotive manufacturing jobs are outside London and the South-East, with wages that are 8% higher than the UK average. The sector accounts for 13.4% of total UK exports of goods with more than 140 countries importing UK produced vehicles, generating £108 billion of trade in total automotive imports and exports.

The UK manufactures almost every type of vehicle, from cars, to vans, taxis, trucks, buses and coaches, as well as specialist and off-highway vehicles, supported by more than 2,500 component providers and some of the world's most skilled engineers. In addition, the sector has vibrant aftermarket and remanufacturing industries. The automotive industry also supports jobs in other key sectors – including advertising, chemicals, finance, logistics and steel.

More detail on UK Automotive available in SMMT's Motor Industry Facts publication at [www.smmt.co.uk/reports/smmt-motor-industry-facts/](http://www.smmt.co.uk/reports/smmt-motor-industry-facts/)

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