



## Making greener deliveries with our ECO-Start vans

Here at RED BOX we want to provide the best possible service to our customers whilst minimising the impact on our environment. So from the September 2010, 65% of our delivery vans will be Mercedes Benz Sprinter ECO-Start.

These vans help decrease emissions through the use of 'ECO-Start' engines. When the vehicle stops in traffic the engine automatically cuts-out, meaning fuel is only being used when the van is on the move. This is estimated to cut fuel consumption by 10% meaning less pollution in the atmosphere.

There are of course a variety of options to cut emissions from vehicles. Naturally we considered them all before settling on ECO-Start. Here's a brief summary of our findings...

### **Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) Vehicles**

There were several disadvantages to using these. First they have less delivery space meaning more deliveries would need to be made. Second, the limited number of LPG stations would mean dead miles travelling to fill-up on fuel. And because LPG is a fossil fuel, we'd still be using the same level of the earth's resources. ECO-Start cuts out the engine, so less fuel is actually being consumed and sent out into the atmosphere.

### **Electric Vehicles**

We first trialed these back in 2008. They work by storing energy after being on charge. Once fully charged the vans can go for around 40-60 miles. Although this eradicates fuel use the engines need to be charged frequently throughout the day affecting our delivery efficiency and creating dead time whilst charging. As well as this they don't have air-conditioning, so after a few test-drives on hot and sunny days our drivers were totally exhausted.

### **Petrol-Electric Hybrid Vehicles**

These vehicles are powered by petrol engine at high speeds and an electric engine at lower speeds and the battery is recharged whilst driving. Exempt from the congestion charge and commanding lower tax rates there are considerable cost benefits to hybrid vehicles. However, the battery power span can be limited.

### **Bio-Fuel**

The most common bio-fuel in Europe is Biodiesel. Made from vegetable oils, animal fats or recycled greases it can be used in its pure form but is usually used as an additive in diesel engines. Most of the current diesel engines can accommodate biodiesel however there are still very few re-fuelling stations. The closest to our headquarters is in Uxbridge which would mean dead miles travelling in the opposite direction to where the majority of our customers are based in order to fill-up on fuel.

We know the single, largest contributor to our carbon footprint comes from our fleet of vans. It's not the perfect solution but we believe ECO-Start is currently the best available option for significantly reducing our carbon level emissions without it affecting our delivery service to you.