Press Release

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ECO Stars launches first taxi operator–specific enhancement to green fleet scheme in Mid Devon

The successful government-backed green fleet recognition scheme, ECO Stars, has expanded to include taxi and private hire vehicle operators so they too can gain recognition for their part in improving local air quality in Mid Devon through running their fleet efficiently.

Lord de Mauley, Parliamentary Under-Secretary for Waste Management and Recycling at Defra, supports the latest improvements to the ECO Stars Fleet Recognition Scheme in Mid Devon.

Lord de Mauley said, "We want to keep improving air quality and reduce the impact it can have on human health and the environment. Local authorities are key to doing this and I congratulate Mid Devon District Council on introducing the ECO Stars scheme as part of its work in tackling emissions and improving local air quality."

Local taxi and private hire vehicle operators attended the launch event held this morning at the Town Hall in Tiverton to present a certificate to Parkway Taxis - the first taxi operator to sign up to the scheme - along with officers and elected Members from Mid Devon District Council. Simon Trevelyan, Business Manager at Parkway Taxis, said "We're proud to be the first taxi operator to sign up to the ECO Stars scheme in Mid Devon. Being part of the ECO Stars scheme means we can show others how we manage our fuel consumption and gain recognition for cutting carbon dioxide in our local area."

MDDC Head of Environmental Services, Paul Williams, said: "Mid Devon District Council wishes to develop the strengths of the already successful ECO Stars Fleet Recognition scheme in Mid Devon so that more local-based, smaller fleet operators participate in the scheme. Local enhancement will work further to develop the ECO Stars scheme and maximise the potential for harder to reach, local fleet operators with fewer vehicles in Mid Devon to join."

By joining the free ECO Stars Fleet Recognition scheme, taxi operators can gain recognition for their commitment to improving efficiency, reducing fuel consumption and reducing emissions – all helping to improve local air quality in Mid Devon. Operators of taxis and private hire vehicles have the opportunity to cut costs of up to £330* per vehicle and improve environmental performance by cutting fuel consumption through joining the scheme.

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With no sign-up fee, help through the application process and tailor-made support for each individual company, taxi and private hire fleet operators across Mid Devon are being encouraged to improve their fleet profile through:

- Fuel management
- Developing driver skills
- Vehicle specification and maintenance
- Use of IT support systems
- Fleet performance monitoring

Key to the ECO Stars scheme is the bespoke 'road map' action plan developed for each new member to help them progress to higher ratings levels. The 'road map' is a free efficiency review of each business undertaken by taxi and private hire fleet specialists on joining the scheme.

For more information on ECO Stars scheme call the ECO Stars Team on 01543 416 416, email ecostars@ttr-ltd.com or visit www.middevon.gov.uk.

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Notes to Editors:

- ***Save £330 per vehicle in fuel costs**

By implementing the key measures recommended by the ECO Stars Scheme, a typical taxi operator could expect to reduce fuel consumption by a minimum of 5% in the first year. Based on 40,000 miles per year at 39 mpg and an average of £1.41 per litre of petrol or £1.45 per litre of diesel, there would be a saving of the equivalent of approximately £330 per vehicle. That's the equivalent to two years vehicle licence for a Hackney Carriage!

A typical taxi could also see annual output of carbon dioxide fall by over half a tonne per year!

- **1- 5 Star rating**
  Each member of the Scheme gets a Star rating based on an assessment of how 'clean' your vehicle fleet is and the best practice you demonstrate in key areas of:
    - Fuel management
    - Developing driver skills
    - Vehicle specification and maintenance
    - Use of IT support systems
    - Fleet performance monitoring

- The ECO Stars scheme is being launched in Mid Devon but has been in existence since January 2009 in South Yorkshire. The ECO Stars South Yorkshire scheme has in excess of 5,000 vehicles signed up from across 30 members, who include household names such as Sainsbury's, Next, Stagecoach, First Group, as well as Local Authority fleets and other local fleet operators.

- More than 670 HGVs, trucks, coaches and buses have been signed up to the ECO Stars Fleet Recognition scheme since it launched in Mid Devon in April 2011. The Mid Devon ECO Stars Scheme is being rolled out by Mid Devon District Council following the scheme's two-year award winning run of success in South Yorkshire.

- The ECO Stars scheme is managed in South Yorkshire and Mid Devon by transport consultants, Transport & Travel Research Ltd www.ttr-ltd.com.

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