



**All Party Parliamentary
Light Rail Group**

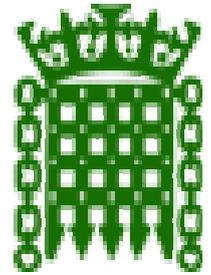
House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA

Light Rail & Trams, Affordable & Sustainable Transport

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House of Commons Select Committees

FOUR SELECT COMMITTEES LAUNCH AN UNPRECEDENTED JOINT INQUIRY ON AIR QUALITY

MP's from four select committees have combined forces to launch an unprecedented joint inquiry on air quality to scrutinise cross-government plans to tackle urban pollution hotspots.

The Environmental Audit Committee, Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Health, and Transport Committees will hold four evidence sessions to consider mounting scientific evidence on the health and environmental impacts of outdoor air pollution.

The Government has lost two UK court cases about its plans to tackle the key pollutant nitrogen dioxide (NO₂). The High Court has ordered the Government to publish a draft new clean air plan to tackle NO₂ by 24 April, with a final plan by 31 July.

Poor air quality is contributing to the early deaths of some 40,000 people in the UK each year. The European Commission has also threatened enforcement which could see the UK pay millions of pounds in fines if the Government does not within two months take steps to bring 16 UK zones within legal pollution limits.

Dr Sarah Wollaston MP, Chair of the Health Committee said

1. "Poor air quality is affecting on the health of millions of people across the U.K. because of the impact of invisible particulates and other pollutants. Our joint inquiry will include an examination of the scale of the harm caused and the action necessary to tackle it."

MPs will examine whether revised Government plans required by the courts to be published by 24 April will go far enough to cut pollution, not only to meet legal limits but also to deliver maximum health and environmental benefits.

These meetings are by invitation only, where MPs, Stakeholders etc., within the Light Rail industry and invited members of the Public will have a chance to discuss debate and raise questions concerning Light Rail.

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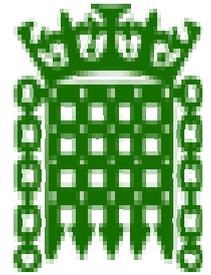
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Mary Creagh MP, Chair of the Environmental Audit Committee said:

“The UK courts have twice told the Government to raise its game to clean up our filthy air because of European Union legislation. My Committee has repeatedly pressed Ministers on their plans for improving air quality as we leave the EU; we hope that the new air quality plan, and this unique joint inquiry, will give us more clarity.”

Louise Ellman MP, Chair of the Transport Select Committee said:

“The UK economy depends on an efficient and flexible transport system but emissions from vehicles are a significant problem and the standards that governments have relied on have not delivered the expected reductions. We will be asking what more can be done to increase the use of cleaner vehicles as well as to encourage the use of sustainable modes of transport.”

Neil Parish MP, Chair of the Environment Food and Rural Affairs Committee, said:

“The solutions to cleaning up our air are not the responsibility of just one minister. That’s why we have taken the unprecedented task of convening four select committees so we can scrutinise the Government’s efforts from every angle and look for holistic solutions that are good for health, transport and the environment.”

TERMS OF REFERENCE

The Committees will be considering the following questions:

- How effectively do Government policies take account of the health and environmental impacts of poor air quality?
- Are the Government's revised plans for tackling nitrogen dioxide levels sufficient to meet the High Court and European Commission requirements for urgent action?
- Does the revised plan set out effective and proportionate measures for reducing emissions from transport?
- Is there sufficient cross-government collaboration to ensure the right fiscal and policy incentives are adopted to ensure air quality targets are achieved?

In order to inform the Committees’ hearing with Ministers, any written submissions which stakeholders may wish to make should be made no later than 5 pm on Friday, 12th May 2017.

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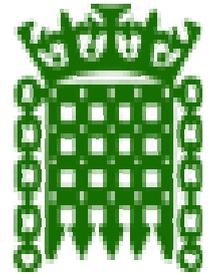
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Notes to Editors:

-There has been increasing public and professional concern about the health and environmental effects of air pollution over the last decade. Nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) and particulates have been causes of particular concern.

-The Government has lost two UK court cases concerning its plans to meet EU limits on nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in the air.

1. The High Court ruling on 2 November in the case of ClientEarth v Secretary of State for the Environment, Food and Rural Affairs is at

<https://www.judiciary.gov.uk/judgments/clientearth-v-secretary-of-state-for-the-environment-food-and-rural-affairs/>

2. “Commission warns Germany, France, Spain, Italy and the United Kingdom on continued air pollution breaches”, European Commission Press Release IP/17/238 http://europa.eu/rapid/press-release_IP-17-238_en.htm

-On 15 February, the European Commission issued a ‘reasoned opinion’ requiring the Government to take action within two months in 16 UK zones currently exceeding these limits—or face infraction proceedings.

The Committees would be grateful to receive **written submissions by 5pm Friday 12 May 2017.**

Notes on the submission of written evidence

It assists the Committee if those submitting written evidence adhere to the following guidelines:

1. Written submissions should be as short as is consistent with conveying the relevant information. As a rough guide, it is usually helpful if they can be confined to six pages or less. Paragraphs should be numbered for ease of reference. A summary of the main points at the start of the submission is sometimes helpful.

2. Evidence should be submitted via the appropriate inquiry page in Word or Rich Text format, with as little use of colour and images as possible. If you wish to submit written evidence to the Committee in another format you must contact a member of staff to discuss this. When making a submission you should

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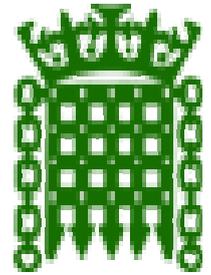
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include a contact name, telephone number and postal address. It should be absolutely clear who the submission is from, particularly whether it is on behalf of an organisation or in the name of an individual.

3. Once accepted by the Committee, written evidence becomes the Committee’s property and it may decide to publish it or make other public use of it. If the Committee decides to accept your contribution as evidence we will email you formally accepting it as such. You may publicise or publish your submission yourself, once you receive the formal acceptance of your evidence to the Committee. When doing so, please indicate that it has been submitted to the Committee.

4. The Committee will usually publish the majority of written evidence that is received, but some submissions will be placed in the Parliamentary Archives for public inspection rather than being printed or published online. If you do not wish your submission to be made public, you must clearly say so, and should contact a member of staff to discuss this. Though the Committee is happy to receive copies of published material or correspondence sent to other parties, formal submissions of evidence should be original work produced for the Committee and not published elsewhere.

5. Committee staff are happy to give more detailed guidance on giving evidence to a select committee, or further advice on any aspect of the Committee’s work, by phone or e-mail.

Additional information on submitting evidence to a Select Committee is available online in the House of Commons Guide to Witnesses.

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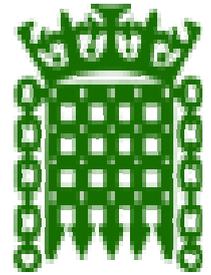
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FURTHER INFORMATION:

Committee Membership is as follows:

Mrs Louise Ellman (Labour/Co-operative, Liverpool Riverside) (Chair); Clive Efford (Labour, Eltham); Robert Ffello (Labour, Stoke-on-Trent South); Karl McCartney (Conservative, Lincoln); Stewart Malcolm McDonald (SNP, Glasgow South); Mark Menzies, (Conservative, Fylde); Huw Merriman (Conservative, Bexhill and Battle); Will Quince (Conservative, Colchester); Iain Stewart (Conservative, Milton Keynes South); Graham Stringer (Labour, Blackley and Broughton); Martin Vickers (Conservative, Cleethorpes).

Specific Committee Information: transcom@parliament.uk 020 7219 6263/3266

Twitter: @CommonsTrans

Media Information: Estelle Currie - currie@parliament.uk 020 7219 8211

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