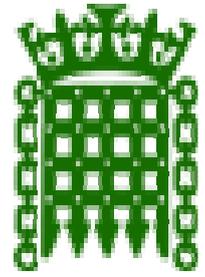


Light Rail (UK)

## All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group

House of Commons London SW1A 0AA

*"The past we inherit, the future we build"*  
Trams – Catalysts for Jobs, Renewal & Regeneration



# Bulgaria: Sofia goes green with grass tram lines



NOVA TV

The new grass tram lines are part of a wider scheme which will include a traffic-free zone in the centre 18/15 Aug 2013  
Bulgaria's capital is grassing over some of its tram lines as part of a programme to make the city greener.

An initial 60m (197ft) stretch of the "green rails" has already opened in Sofia's Ruski Pаметник Square. Architects hope the new turf will muffle traffic noise, improve air quality and cool the often torrid Sofia summer heat, Nova TV reports. A drainage system has been installed to divert rain water off the rails into the soil beneath the grass.

Although other vehicles will use the square for the time being, the authorities want to include it in a car-free zone which will cover three blocks in the city centre by 2020. Other tramways elsewhere in the zone will be grassed over too, according to the plan.

This meeting 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 & Trams.

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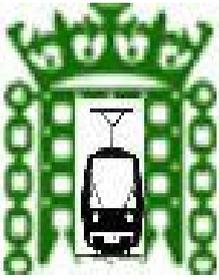
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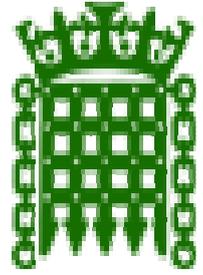


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Many social media users like the idea, thinking it will give Sofia a "more European" eco-friendly feel, although some see it as no more than an election stunt by the city's governing Gerb party.

"The rails will stay green only until after the election," says one person on the Dnevnik newspaper website.

Plenty of others worry that the grass will be left to dry out and turn yellow, with one reader on the Vesti website warning: "Nice dry grass needs only one cigarette butt, then we'll see the spectacle of trams passing through flames."

By News from Elsewhere... ..as found by BBC Monitoring

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