



All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group

House of Commons
London SW1A 0AA
Light Rail & Trams, Affordable & Sustainable Transport

"The past we inherit, the future we build ourselves"



"TramTrain does it Greener and Cheaper on lightly used railway lines and in the streets"

Four of world's biggest cities to ban diesel cars/vehicles from their centres



Cars sit in traffic in Mexico City, Mexico.

Photograph: Brett Gundlock/Getty Images

Paris, Madrid, Athens and Mexico City will ban the most polluting cars and vans by 2025 to tackle air pollution

Four of the world's biggest cities are to ban diesel vehicles from their centres within the next decade, as a means of tackling air pollution, with campaigners urging other city leaders to follow suit.

The mayors of Paris, Madrid, Athens and Mexico City announced plans on Friday to take diesel cars and vans off their roads by 2025.

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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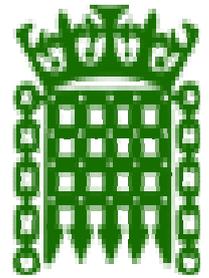
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Anne Hidalgo, mayor of Paris, led the initiative at the C40 conference of mayors on climate change, taking place in Mexico this week. She said: "Mayors have already stood up to say that climate change is one of the greatest challenges we face. Today, we also stand up to say we no longer tolerate air pollution and the health problems and deaths it causes, particularly for our most vulnerable citizens."

"Soot from diesel vehicles is among the big contributors to ill health and global warming," added Helena

Molin Valdés, head of the United Nations' climate and clean air coalition, noting that more than nine out of 10 people around the globe live where air pollution exceeds World Health Organisation safety limits. Miguel Ángel Mancera, mayor of Mexico City, said increasing investments in public transport would also help clean the city's air, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Giorgos Kaminis, mayor of Athens, said his goal was to remove all cars from the city centre. The city authorities will also work with national governments and manufacturers, and promote electric vehicles and cleaner transport.

Recent research has uncovered the scale of the problem, with 3 million premature deaths a year attributed to dirty air, as well as millions of other illnesses, particularly in children.

Green campaigners welcomed the announcement, saying it showed that it was possible to clean up big cities.

Alan Andrews, lawyer at the NGO ClientEarth, whose legal victory has forced a UK government re-think of air pollution plans, said: "This shows political leaders across the world are waking up to the damage diesel is doing to our health. But 2025 is a long time away when you consider the 467,000 premature deaths caused by air pollution in Europe [alone] every year."

He called on other leaders to "go further and faster [with] bold new measures".

Jenny Bates, of Friends of the Earth, added: "This bold move to get rid of diesels, the most polluting vehicles, is exactly what is needed. We need cleaner vehicles and fewer of them. Getting rid of diesel is essential and we must also give people genuine alternatives to driving."

She also called on London's mayor, Sadiq Khan, to phase out diesel vehicles from the city by 2025, and for new clean air zones in all of the UK's cities and major towns, with funding taken away from roads to promote sustainable alternative transport.

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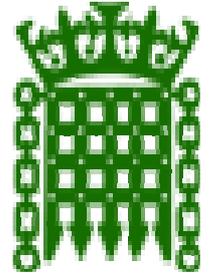
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Diesel fuel use is a key cause of air pollution in cities, as the engines produce nitrogen dioxide, a harmful gas, and tiny particulates that can lodge in the lungs. These forms of pollution can also interact with other substances to create, in some conditions, a toxic soup.

Yet diesel use has been rising in many countries, partly for economic reasons and partly as a consequence of measures to combat climate change – diesel vehicles burn fuel more efficiently than conventional petrol engines, reducing carbon dioxide emissions.

It is not clear whether diesel vehicles in the four cities will be subject to a total ban, or what areas of the cities will be covered. Some cities already have measures in place intended to reduce congestion and clean up the air, such as low-emission zones that involve traffic restrictions.

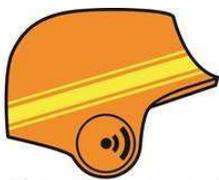
It must be noted that Mexico City and Athens with single line trams but plans for many additional lines, all the other cities have extensive tram and light rail system with expansions planned as alternatives, a major contribution no doubt to their Mayor's decision

Courtesy:

Fiona Harvey, Environment Correspondent,
the Guardian, 2nd Dec 2016

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