

Light Rail (UK)

# All Party Parliamentary Light Rail Group

House of Commons  
London SW1A 0AA  
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## [How Nottingham cut air pollution with UK's only workplace parking levy](#)

Chris Powell is part of a declining species in Nottingham: he drives a car to work. This is because the city in England's East Midlands charges the hundreds of companies with more than 10 parking spaces a hefty £415 annual levy per space.

Mr Powell is also lucky; his employer, law firm Rothera Sharp, pays his fee

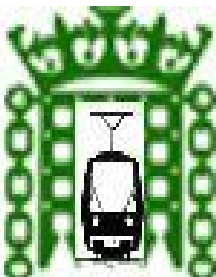
“As a firm we are all in favour of the levy,” said the solicitor, who gets one of the company’s prized 15 parking spaces because of his hectic schedule. “All the revenue is going to local transport infrastructure.”



Council leader David Mellen: 'Congestion is a great deal less than in other cities' © Charlie Bibby/Financial Times

David Mellen, leader of the Labour-controlled council, said the parking levy, imported from Perth, Australia, was controversial when proposed. “The chamber of commerce was dead against it. They said businesses would leave Nottingham and investors would not come. In fact businesses come here because of our tram system. Congestion is a great deal less than in other cities.”

*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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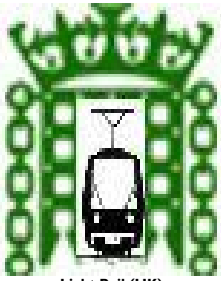
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The UK's only workplace parking levy has priced many drivers off the road, but it is popular because the money is invested in public transport and the city's air is becoming cleaner.

Solicitor Chris Powell is one of the shrinking number of people who drive to work © Charlie Bibby/Financial Times Other cities are taking note. Officials in Edinburgh, London, Oxford and Birmingham have all been in touch and the Scottish government has just passed legislation that would permit councils to implement similar levies.

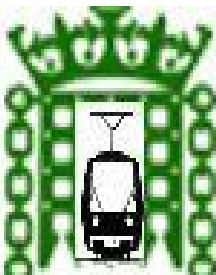
Boris Johnson, the prime minister, also recognises the need to tackle the problem: on Tuesday the government published a bill that set targets to, among other things, curb air pollution. Air pollution contributed to 36,000 premature deaths across the UK annually, according to Public Health England, a government body. The EU legal limit on the level of nitrogen dioxide, the most dangerous pollutant, is 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> and Nottingham hit 34 µg/m<sup>3</sup> in 2018, down from 41 in 2012.

After the UK failed to bring air pollution under legal limits in major cities, the Supreme Court ruled in 2015 that local authorities must reduce levels of nitrogen dioxide. The government responded by ordering three dozen of the largest and most polluted cities to design action plans to tackle their smog. Because of measures already taken,

Nottingham is the only city of its size or larger that is not introducing daily entry fees on more polluting vehicles. It had introduced the parking levy in 2012 and has used the £61m raised to date, along with government money, to fund a £580m tram network covering 20 miles across a population of 630,000.

Council leader David Mellen: 'Congestion is a great deal less than in other cities'

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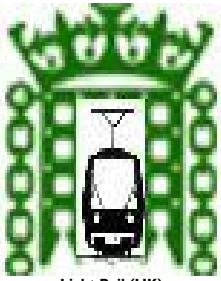
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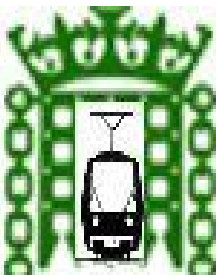
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Congestion is a great deal less than in other cities.” Since 2012 the number of businesses has increased by 2,350, almost a quarter. There has been a net increase of 23,400 jobs, or 14 per cent, in the city during the period. And over the past 17 years, car use has dropped 7 per cent and, unlike for most UK urban areas, public transport use has increased — by 7 per cent.

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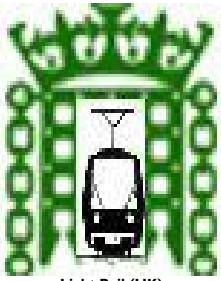
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Pollution: can tracking your personal exposure change how you live? Scott Knowles, chief executive of the East Midlands chamber of commerce, said the key to winning businesses' support was that the money was ringfenced for transport. "Any additional income has to support proper improvements that have real impact for the city's economy, not just the local political project of the day," he said. "Most people in Nottingham have not got a car," Mr Mellen said.

"We were asking people who want to drive to work in Nottingham from outside to contribute to the city's wellbeing.

**Driving to work is not a right, it is a privilege."**

Some employers, such as the city council, make staff pay for parking, others contribute to the levy and some, like Experian — the financial data business with 3,000 staff in Nottingham, pays the full charge, saying it "boosts the image of the city". Claire Morrison: 'I go everywhere on the bus's

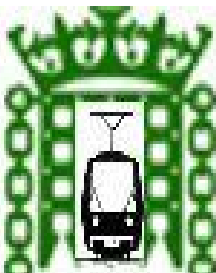
Claire Morrison, a colleague of Mr Powell at Rothera Sharp, is enthusiastic about the changes. "I go everywhere on the bus," she said. "We have six offices across the city, and I can get to them all in around 15 minutes, even out in the suburbs."

Nottingham has another advantage. The council retained a controlling stake in the main bus company when the government enforced mass privatisation in the 1980s. Its co-ordinates with the only other operator, a family run group called Trent Barton, to ensure cheap, comprehensive coverage.

The city is converting all its buses to run on biogas and building more park-and-ride sites. Recommended Personal Finance Tackling climate change — an investor's guide Only one group appears unhappy: taxi drivers. By next year all 420 of their vehicles must comply with emissions standards that effectively outlaw diesel vehicles more than three years old. And after 2025 they will have to drive an ultra-low emission vehicle, typically electric. So far only 20 have one.

The council is offering drivers £3,500 each from a £1m government fund but an electric cab can cost about £67,000, twice that of a standard model.

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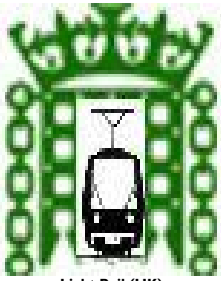
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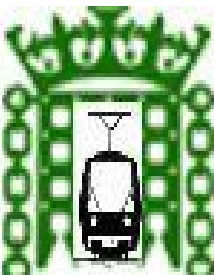
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Masoud Allam, 50, whose vehicle is not compliant, said many drivers will be forced out of business. "They are working 16-hour days to pay for the cabs," he said. "We love to help the environment, but we have to eat." The measures have seen the city's carbon dioxide emissions fall by a quarter since 2015 and the council hopes Nottingham will become the UK's first carbon neutral city within nine years. A council briefing proudly paraphrases Brian Clough, the late Nottingham Forest football club manager. "We wouldn't say we're the greenest city in the UK, but we're in the top one."

Courtesy Charlie Bibby/Financial Times :

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