

# **TramForward**

## *Campaigning for Light Rail*

PRESS RELEASE FROM *TramForward*

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### **TramForward CRITICISES "LONDON'S STEP BACKWARDS"**

Abandonment of light rail schemes damaging to poorer Londoners, regeneration and environment, says campaign

Light rail campaign TramForward has criticised London Mayor Boris Johnson's lack of foresight on the future of surface public transport in London following the recent publication of his "Way to Go" policy document. Tram Forward believes that the Cross River Tram scheme should mark the start of a much larger network of surface light rail routes in central and inner London, ultimately extending to resolve the problem that Mayor Johnson himself describes as "a panting wall of red metal" - the buses that bisect Oxford Street.

TramForward spokesman Geoff Lusher said that the decision to stop work on the Cross River Tram project and the planned extension of the highly-successful Croydon Tramlink network to Crystal Palace was entirely wrong, as London struggles to provide greater capacity on its public transport network because of the heavy dependence on diesel buses as the only surface mode throughout city, when it was obvious that tram or light rail lines would offer a radical improvement, as demonstrated in Croydon and the Docklands area.

"Buses are already full on a number of key routes and the Mayor's decision to scrap articulated buses will put further pressure on the network" said Mr Lusher. "Other cities throughout Europe benefit from the use of trams on their most popular services, bringing significant environmental benefits to their citizens. And in London itself there are two excellent examples of light rail bringing radical improvements: in Croydon and Docklands."

The clear regeneration benefits already identified from the Cross River Tram project will not be delivered without investment in a more efficient mode than buses, and London must seriously plan for a future in which the supply of diesel fuel will drastically diminish at the same time as demand for public transport increases with motorists facing high petrol prices and scarcity of supply.

"Getting the tram back to London's streets is the most intelligent option for this Mayor," said Mr Lusher, "Light rail would benefit many thousands of poorer Londoners by providing a quality transport option and boosting the economy. Stopping tram development is a major step backwards."

### **NOTES FOR EDITORS**

1. TramForward is the campaigning arm of the Light Rail Transit Association.
2. The Light Rail Transit Association is the world's leading organisation campaigning for better public transport through light rail, tramway and metro systems in our towns and cities for 70 years. It also supports the revitalisation of suburban and rural transport through the application of light rail.
3. The LRTA acts through its network of local branches, which campaign for better transport in their localities.
4. Membership of the LRTA costs under 12p a day. To join, visit [www.lrta.org](http://www.lrta.org) or write to the Membership Secretary, LRTA, 38 Wolseley Road, Sale, Greater Manchester, M33 7AU. Members of the LRTA receive the monthly magazine *Tramways & Urban Transit* - written and read by experts in the field - and gain other benefits including discounts on videos and books, tours of transport systems and cut-price admission to selected transport sites.
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