

TramForward

Campaigning for Light Rail

PRESS RELEASE FROM *TramForward*

19 March 2018

TramForward believes Improving Air Quality report does not go far enough

TramForward, while welcoming the report [Improving Air Quality](#) published by the House of Commons Environment Food and Rural Affairs, Environmental Audit, Health and Social Care, and Transport Committees, is concerned that it does not pay sufficient attention to one of the major causes of pollution from road traffic.

Government proposals so far have almost entirely concentrated on reducing tailpipe emissions, in particular oxides of nitrogen. Although this is of course extremely important it is not the whole story and substantial harmful particulate pollution is produced by tyre, brake and road surface wear, known as the Oslo effect. The heavier the vehicle, the greater the problem, so buses and HGVs are the worst offenders.

Jim Harkins, Chairman of TramForward (the Light Rail Transit Association External Relations Group) said "A switch to electric propulsion for rubber-tired vehicles will solve the tailpipe problem but not the Oslo effect. Indeed, electric vehicles tend to be heavier than their internal combustion counterparts and thus pollution from the Oslo effect will be greater."

While the Select Committees' report does raise this question, TramForward considers it is not given sufficient prominence, nor is much said about how to reduce the Oslo effect on our roads. Any future Clean Air Act must also take the Oslo effect and ways to reduce it into account.

TramForward believes that a substantial investment in trams in our major towns and cities, replacing heavily trafficked bus corridors, will substantially improve air quality. Electric-powered trams produce no tailpipe emissions and very much less particulate pollution from wear and tear of surfaces.

Trams also have the proven ability to effect a substantial modal switch from private to public transport. Persuading people to switch from cars to public transport, where the public transport is provided by buses will not reduce the Oslo effect but will make it worse.

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 80 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 15p a day. To join, visit 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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