

ISSUES IN ENVIRONMENTAL ENGAGEMENT: PROMOTING CLEANER TRANSPORT IN LONDON

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This paper discusses some of the problems faced when trying to engage a multitude of small urban polluters on environmental issues. It sets out a number of different approaches to engaging the diverse business community and individuals which exist in a large city. This paper is based on our experience of promoting cleaner road transport in London. Road transport is a major focus of our work as it is the largest source of pollution emissions in London. Regulation plays a role in improving air pollution from transport, but it is limited in power and scope; we need voluntary buy-in from businesses and individuals in order to achieve a healthy urban atmosphere. This paper summarises the complex system of regulation, penalties and incentives which operate in London to make cleaner transport a more attractive option to vehicle users, whether they own one car or hundreds of lorries. This includes provision of information, emission standards, tax incentives, grants, discounts and other perks. Why, given all these measures, is progress towards widespread cleaner transport so slow? Road transport is common to many organisations and individuals, but they all have different issues, needs and barriers. Cost is a common barrier, but time, ease, perceived irrelevance, lack of information and fear can influence choices. Trying to engage with big business, small enterprises and the public on cleaner transport (and other environmental issues) requires many different approaches, addressing the different barriers that exist for each sector, group and individual.