

## Autumn Budget 2017

# Friends of the Earth calls for a Clean Air budget to rid the UK's towns and cities of illegal pollution

### Context

- There are 40,000 early deaths annually in the UK due to air pollution.<sup>i</sup>
- The World Health Organisation classed diesel fumes as carcinogenic to humans, in the same group as tobacco smoke.<sup>ii</sup>
- Even modern 'Euro 6' diesel cars produce more than five times as much NOx as Euro 6 petrol cars.<sup>iii</sup>
- Transport is responsible for 25% of UK greenhouse gas emissions, fuelling runaway climate change.<sup>iv</sup>
- 85% of air quality zones in the UK (37 of 43) did not meet EU nitrogen dioxide limits in 2016.<sup>v</sup>
- 2026 – the government's estimate of when all 43 zones in the UK will be compliant with EU nitrogen dioxide limits.<sup>vi</sup>
- 2010 – original deadline for compliance with EU nitrogen dioxide limits.<sup>vii</sup>

### Friends of the Earth's demands

Establish a **Clean Air Fund** with adequate resources to fund a network of effective Clean Air Zones, and other measures needed, so that the UK has legal levels of air pollution by 2019.

- At least **£1.2bn** is needed to fund the 53 Clean Air Zones required in England.<sup>viii</sup>
- Every £1 spent on Clean Air Zones is recovered in health benefits, according to the government's own modelling.<sup>ix</sup>

Introduce a **diesel scrappage scheme** to help drivers who bought diesels in good faith switch to cleaner transport

- This must be funded at least in part by manufacturers who have caused so much of the pollution problem, via a "dieselgate levy".
- "Fewer cars, not just newer cars". Highest incentives for mobility tokens (used for car club membership, rail season tickets, e-bikes, etc.), then EVs, then hybrids, then 2<sup>nd</sup> hand petrols for those most in need.

Reverse the perverse **VED** diesel incentive

- Introduce an at least £800 registration VED diesel supplement to deter diesel sales.<sup>x</sup>
- Restructure annual VED to further disincentivise diesel sales.<sup>xi</sup>
- Ensure all revenue raised is ring-fenced for air quality measures, such as the Clean Air Fund.

Re-introduce the **fuel duty escalator**

- The health and climate change impacts of petrol and diesel fuel are hugely damaging, so fuel duty must rise to deter road use.
- Far greater investment in public transport – particularly in rural areas – is needed to support those on lowest incomes.

## Spend VED and Fuel Duty income on air quality measures, **not new roads**

- From 2020/21, all projected £6.1bn revenue from VED will be ring-fenced for the roads programme, including the building of new roads.<sup>xii</sup> This is perverse – more roads means more pollution.<sup>xiii</sup>
- All revenue from VED and increased Fuel Duty should be directed towards measures that improve people’s mobility in a way which also improves health by reducing air pollution and people’s exposure to it, including investing in public transport, walking and cycling.

## Invest in **walking and cycling** to the tune of at least £20 per person

- The Government’s Cycling and Walking Investment Strategy (CWIS) earmarked £316m of central Government funding for the CWIS over the 5-year period 2016/17 to 2020/21, equivalent to an annual average of **£1.38 per person** annually in England outside London.<sup>xiv</sup>
- In contrast, roads spending equates to **£84 per person** in 2020/21.
- The Government should heed the All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group’s recommendation that cycle spending be increased to £10 per person, rising to £20 per person.<sup>xv</sup>
- A recent Sustrans survey people living in seven major UK cities found that **78% want more protected bike routes** to make cycling safer, even when this could mean less space for other road traffic”.<sup>xvi</sup>

Our briefing [“Too little, too late’ – a critique of the Air Quality Plan”](#) contains detail related to how many and what type of Clean Air Zones we need.

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<sup>i</sup> <https://www.rcplondon.ac.uk/projects/outputs/every-breath-we-take-lifelong-impact-air-pollution>

<sup>ii</sup> [http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2012/pdfs/pr213\\_E.pdf](http://www.iarc.fr/en/media-centre/pr/2012/pdfs/pr213_E.pdf)

<sup>iii</sup> <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/up-in-the-air-part-2.pdf>

<sup>iv</sup> <https://www.gov.uk/government/policies/transport-emissions>

<sup>v</sup> <https://www.nao.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2017/11/Air-quality.pdf>

<sup>vi</sup> *ibid*

<sup>vii</sup> *ibid*

<sup>viii</sup> Government estimates that 27 charging Clean Air Zones would have a cost of £600m to Central Government (See the p149 of the Technical Report for the Government’s Final Air Quality Plan [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/632916/air-quality-plan-technical-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/632916/air-quality-plan-technical-report.pdf)). Friends of the Earth believes 53 charging Clean Air Zones are necessary, hence the £1.2bn figure

<sup>ix</sup> Table J.1, p.150 of Technical Report for the Air Quality Plan

[https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/632916/air-quality-plan-technical-report.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/632916/air-quality-plan-technical-report.pdf)

<sup>x</sup> As recommended by Policy Exchange <https://policyexchange.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/up-in-the-air-part-2.pdf>

<sup>xi</sup> The current annual rate for petrol and diesel is the same (£140), with only a £10 discount for alternative fuel cars including hybrids.

<sup>xii</sup> <http://www.autoexpress.co.uk/car-news/consumer-news/92131/budget-2015-new-road-repair-fund-and-car-tax-overhaul>

<sup>xiii</sup> <http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/roads-nowhere/induced-traffic>

<sup>xiv</sup> [https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment\\_data/file/603527/cycling-walking-investment-strategy.pdf](https://www.gov.uk/government/uploads/system/uploads/attachment_data/file/603527/cycling-walking-investment-strategy.pdf)

<sup>xv</sup> <https://allpartycycling.org/18-recommendations/>

<sup>xvi</sup> [https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/file\\_content\\_type/bike-life-2017-summary-report.pdf](https://www.sustrans.org.uk/sites/default/files/file_content_type/bike-life-2017-summary-report.pdf)