

# MANCHESTER CLIMATE FORTNIGHTLY

Issue 1, 23rd June 2008

## There's going to be an almighty TIF!

The proposed 'congestion charge' for Greater Manchester seems set to cause as much controversy in environmental circles as in the wider world. Over a long hot summer, the positions of groups such as Clean Air Now, the Green Party and Manchester Respect will be held to public scrutiny and tested to destruction.

Manchester Climate Fortnightly spoke to local groups about what they think.

The Clean Air Now coalition was insistent that "we've got to keep Manchester moving. With double the national average for childhood asthma and congestion levels set to soar, it's time to turn our transport system around and boldly embrace the Transport Innovation Fund (bid) and demand radically better transport, including quality public transport and a safe environment for walking and cycling. A congestion charge is an important element of this, to both restrict the growth of traffic and help to fund public transport improvements. We need to take the opportunity offered by national Government to bring our transport system into the 21st century."

Manchester Green Party offered more qualified approval. "The councils in favour of the bid have presented it as a solution to congestion. Insufficient attention has been paid to environmental concerns. There is nothing about improving facilities for cycling, for instance, and it is likely that most of the money will be absorbed in the Metrolink expansion. Our local politicians and businesses need to start thinking about a low-carbon future."

Manchester Climate Action did not have an official view, but speaking in a personal capacity one activist said "I think it is generally a good thing. However we have some concerns over the wealth divide, it may be a classic situation where people with more money will continue to do whatever they want."

These concerns were central to Manchester Respect's doubts. In a letter to the Manchester Evening News, its environment spokesman Roy Wilkes voiced concerns that "The proposed charge will do nothing to solve climate change or congestion. It will be working people – those who are already suffering from rising food and energy bills and falling real incomes – who will be hardest hit. The only beneficiaries will be the rich, who will be able to drive their huge cars on roads

that are marginally less congested and to whom £5 a day will be nothing but a minor irritant".

### Background

The congestion charge is only one part of a wider scheme called the Transport Innovation Fund, set up by central government. If accepted by the Association of Greater Manchester Authorities (AGMA), the scheme would mean £3 billion worth of investment in public transport around Greater Manchester. £1.2 billion of that would be in loans, the rest in grants. The money is only available if a congestion charge is part of the overall scheme.

The congestion charge itself would be imposed on traffic crossing two rings around Manchester, and then only on traffic travelling in during the morning and out in the evening.

### More information from

AGMA/GMPTE site

[www.gmfuturetransport.org.uk](http://www.gmfuturetransport.org.uk)



Marc Roberts,

[throboblins.blogspot.com](http://throboblins.blogspot.com)

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## MEANWHILE, IN OTHER NEWS...

**Trafford Council** has awarded environmental charity Action for Sustainable Living funding totalling £47,000. The money will be spent on tackling transport emissions and fuel poverty by developing school projects and increasing the number of local project managers. [www.afsl.org.uk](http://www.afsl.org.uk)

**On Friday 13th June**, several Manchester activists were among 30 people who stopped a train full of coal that was headed to Drax power station, the biggest single source of carbon dioxide emissions in Europe. This was part of an ongoing campaign of non-violent direct action. For more info see [www.climatecamp.org.uk](http://www.climatecamp.org.uk) or [www.thecoalhole.org](http://www.thecoalhole.org)

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## Local and Regional

**June 10** 20-year old MMU student Dominic Green has co-developed "Enviro-Match", which uses games to help educate children and young people on environmental issues. [resolveevolvesolve.com](http://resolveevolvesolve.com).

**June 20** Students and staff at Parris Wood High School, Didsbury tried to set up a recycling scheme, but were asked for £2000 per year by Manchester City Council for the privilege of having the bins emptied. (M.E.N.)

## National

**June 7** EON claims that England's failure to qualify for EURO 2008 could save the equivalent of 30 double-decker buses worth of carbon dioxide emissions.

**June 9** The Climate Bill went to the House of Commons for its second reading.

**June 16** The Association of British Insurers warned that 500,000 properties will be uninsurable unless flood risks are managed better.

**June 21** Energy Minister Malcolm Wicks announced the UK's plans to achieve the EU target of 15% of energy from renewables by 2020. Loads of solar heating panels and 3,500 new wind turbines.

## International

**June 6th** The US Senate fails to pass a Climate Bill that would have required greenhouse gas emissions to be cut 18 percent below 2005 levels by 2020 and nearly 70 percent by mid-century.

**June 10** Japan launches an experimental carbon trading

scheme for industry and pledges to cut greenhouse gas emissions by 60 to 80% by 2050

**June 20** Friends of the Earth Canada is suing the Conservative government for the inadequacy of its climate change mitigation plans (Canada signed up to the Kyoto Protocol, but its emissions have soared anyway).

For a fuller account of the planet's misadventures over the last 2 weeks, see [www.manchesterclimatefortnightly.info](http://www.manchesterclimatefortnightly.info)

## Scary Science

**June 11** The world could be tracking towards irreversible climate change as warming takes place much quicker than previously thought, an Adelaide academic has warned. Climate change expert Barry Brook, of Adelaide University, told a Canberra conference — Imagining the Real Life on a Greenhouse Earth — atmospheric carbon dioxide levels were headed towards 600 parts a million, and forecast global temperature increases of up to six degrees...



## ARRESTING CRAP OF THE WEEK British public in "head-in-sand" shocker!

**June 22** An Ipsos-MORI poll commissioned by the Observer newspaper has found that 6 out of 10 Britons think that "many scientific experts still question if humans are contributing to climate change" The hard work of the IPCC-bashers and assorted Channel 4-funded loons seems to be working.

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## WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON?

**June 9** Eleven people attended the Campaign against Climate Change meeting to discuss strategy, the recent Heathrow demo and upcoming plans. [www.gmcacc.org](http://www.gmcacc.org)

**June 13** Various academics and activists discussed "apocalyptic rhetoric" at the first of three workshops of the "Future Ethics" programme of Manchester University's

theology programme. [www.manchester.ac.uk/FutureEthics](http://www.manchester.ac.uk/FutureEthics)

**June 17** Manchester Evening News hosted a nuclear debate

**June 17** Stop Expansion at Manchester Airport (SEMA) held a planning meeting

**June 19** Twelve Green Party members debated the TIF bid

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## WHAT'S COMING UP?

**Wednesday 25 June** from 7pm

Friends of the Earth climate sub-group meeting Greenfish Resource Centre, Oldham St [www.manchesterfoe.org.uk](http://www.manchesterfoe.org.uk)

**Thursday 26 June** from 7.45pm

Greenpeace meeting, upstairs at Ape and Apple, John Dalton St [manchestergreenpeace@googlemail.com](mailto:manchestergreenpeace@googlemail.com)

**Saturday 28 June** from 10am to 4pm-ish

Climate Strategies Day Discussing what the council is doing, what the government is doing and what we should be doing Bridge 5 Mill, 22a Beswick St Ancoats [www.manchesterclimateforum.org.uk](http://www.manchesterclimateforum.org.uk)

**Monday 30 June** from 6pm

Circle Dancing in Birchfields Park Permaculture Network event. <http://manchesterpermaculture.net/>

**Tuesday 1 July** from 7-8.15pm

Manchester Climate Action meeting at Jabez Clegg [manchester@climatecamp.org.uk](mailto:manchester@climatecamp.org.uk)

**Thursday 3 July** from 7.30pm

Action for Sustainable Living Volunteer Social at the Hillary Step, 199 Upper Chorlton Road, Whalley Range

**Monday 7th July** sees the TIF consultation begin, the release of Manchester Enterprise's "Mini-Stern". And the next MCFly...

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Comments, leads, leaks and offers of no-strings money to [editor@manchesterclimatefortnightly.info](mailto:editor@manchesterclimatefortnightly.info)