

Greens: Leeds council air pollution plans “woefully inadequate”



Green Party

5 December 2017

Leeds Green Party has labelled the city council's new air pollution plan [1] “woefully inadequate”.

Launched on the 65th anniversary of the “Great Smog of London” which caused the death of approximately 4,000 people, the party says the council needs to be much bolder, ambitious, and optimistic in its plans for reducing air pollution in Leeds. They say the council should be looking to create a “breathing city” where everyone can breathe clean air, enjoy green spaces, and get about by walking, cycling, or public transport.

Around 700 people die prematurely from air pollution in Leeds every year [2]. The Green Party argues that the council's new strategy won't reduce the amount of Particulate Matter (PM) in the air [3], could cause public transport fees to rise rather than fall, and doesn't contain significant targets for improving cycle or walking infrastructure in Leeds.

Chris Bell, Leeds Green Party Policy Officer said:

“The council's plans are only focussed on reducing NOx emissions with no focus on Particulate Matter. There has been no guarantee that bus and train companies will not raise their fares to compensate for the fines they will face for non-compliance, which does not discourage private car usage. These plans do not go far enough to lower the impact of air pollution on the health of Leeds citizens.”

Notes

[1] New plan will be available here: <http://www.leeds.gov.uk/Pages/Default.aspx>

[2] <https://www.yorkshireeveningpost.co.uk/news/leeds-named-hotspot-for-air-pollution-deaths-as-epidemic-costs-local-nhs-480m-1-7698344>

[3] <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/assets/documents/reports/aqeg/pm-summary.pdf>

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