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CARS TO COACHES

Two House of Commons Groups consider the Government policies needed to encourage Coach Transport.

On the 7th December the All Party Parliamentary Group on Climate Change and the All Party Parliamentary Group on Peak Oil are looking at the environmental advantages of coach transport and the Government policies necessary to encourage coach transport. The meeting will take place in the Grand Committee Room at the Commons between 6.30pm and 8.00pm. The chair will be John Hemming MP and the study will be presented by Alan Storkey, Peter Miller, Mike Lambden and John Austin.

Coaches are 90% more fuel efficient than cars, and far more than a hundred times more operationally efficient. They address most of our current transport problems. They are twice as green as the national rail system and way ahead of electric cars. They clear congestion; a properly utilized coach lane can carry 30,000 people while only 2-3,000 are carried by cars. Each coach hoovers up a mile of car traffic, thus making more space for remaining cars. They are safer, cut millions of hours of inefficient driving, allow work and leisure while travelling, and can be as comfortable, fast and frequent as we choose to make them. They are cheap to run and help those without cars.

At present they are ignored in public policy. The Department for Transport has no strategy, no data and no personnel concerned with coach transport. There are less than 2,000 scheduled coaches and an infrequent service to congested city centre coach stations. They have no infrastructure, no subsidies, no public investment and have been marginalized in transport policy.

Through a lack of elementary economic thought we ignore the only mode of passenger transport capable of meeting the CO2 targets agreed by all major parties.

This meeting will look at the policies needed to create a full national coach system which is fast, frequent and luxurious, opens up millions of coach journeys and can send our passenger transport emissions spiralling downwards. The costs in terms of public investment is less than £1 billion, a fraction of rail and other transport infrastructure costs. Such a system could be in place in five years..

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