

## ACTION NEEDED ON AIR QUALITY

In December 2007 The British Lung Foundation called on the Government to take more action to improve air quality after research released in the New England Journal of Medicine found diesel traffic to be a health hazard for asthmatics.

Researchers looked at how a two-hour walk in two different parts of London affected the health of a group of asthmatics. One group was on Oxford Street, where only diesel-powered buses and taxis can drive, and the other was in a traffic-free section of Hyde Park. Those who walked on Oxford Street saw a greater reduction in lung function. "This is an important study because it very clearly and vividly demonstrates the negative impact diesel fumes have on lung health, especially in asthmatics," says Dr Keith Prowse, Chairman of the British Lung Foundation. "Reducing harmful emissions would be good news for the one in seven people in the UK who have a lung disease and should mean fewer premature deaths, reduced hospital visits, and fewer GP consultations for people with respiratory disease. The Low Emission Zone, which will be introduced in the capital in February, is a positive step forward, but more needs to be done to improve the air Londoners breathe."



Although taxi drivers would support campaigns for cleaner air as they are breathing in London's air every day, once again taxis came under attack despite the Mayor's Taxi Emission Strategy being implemented. As more and more taxis now meet Euro III standards for emissions, the air should be improving, which is good news for everyone.

## DRIVERS' WORST FEARS CONVERGE AT HANGER LANE

Following years as a constant fixture in traffic bulletins, London's Hanger Lane Gyratory System has been named by motorists as the road junction they most fear negotiating. According to a new survey of British drivers by motor insurer Highway Insurance, more than a quarter (28%) of those asked said that Hanger Lane was the junction they felt most apprehensive about having to face.

Second place on 26% went to Birmingham's Spaghetti Junction and third

placed on 25% went to Marble Arch in London. The Elephant and Castle was in fourth place. Commenting on the results, Highway's managing director Chris Hill said: "I have driven around Hanger Lane many times and understand completely why people find it so daunting. Anxiety has a significant impact on drivers' behaviour so it's interesting to see how motorists react to these major junctions. I suspect that for many people, the thought of these junctions is actually worse than the reality."

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