

## Did you know? —Cars are being used for shorter and shorter journeys!

- 60% of all car trips are less than 5 miles.
- 1 in 4 of all car journeys is less than 2 miles.
- 60% of journeys between 1 and 2 miles are by car.
- 70% of journeys to work are by car.
- School journeys account for 1 in 6 cars at the height of the rush hour — much higher in some areas.

## Organisations and Resources

Get on board Operation Noah, the climate change campaign of CEL and the Environmental Issues Network of Churches Together in Britain and Ireland, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions by reducing car and aeroplane use. Tel. 01949 861516.

[www.christian-ecology.org.uk/noah](http://www.christian-ecology.org.uk/noah)

Airport Watch is an umbrella organisation which promotes a sustainable future for aviation that fully recognises all environmental and amenity effects. Broken Wharf House, 2 Broken Wharf, London EC4V 3DT. Tel. 020 7248 2223.

[www.airportwatch.org.uk](http://www.airportwatch.org.uk) also see [www.aef.org.uk](http://www.aef.org.uk)

Carplus, the umbrella body for car sharing schemes who advise on setting up formal car clubs or informal car sharing schemes. Suite C17, Joseph's Well, Honover Walk, Leeds LS3 1AB. Tel. 0113-234 9299.

[www.carshareclubs.org.uk](http://www.carshareclubs.org.uk) & [www.carplus.org.uk](http://www.carplus.org.uk)

Catholic Roadwatch, a road safety organisation, PO Box 1580, London W7 3ZP.

For National Bike Week contact the Cycle Touring Club, Parklands, Railton Road, Guildford GU2 9JX. Tel. 0870-873 0060.

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

EcoCongregation is a programme providing a framework and resources for practical church action on environmental issues, including transport. EcoCongregation, The Arthur Rank Centre, Stoneleigh Park, Warwicks CV8 2LZ. Tel. 02476 853061.

[www.ecocongregation.org](http://www.ecocongregation.org)

Environmental Transport Association, 10 Church Street, Weybridge KT13 8RS. Tel. 0800 212810. For up-to-date information on Green Transport Week, European Car Free Day (22nd September), and Car Buyers' Guide, visit the ETA's website [www.eta.co.uk](http://www.eta.co.uk)

Friends of the Earth, 26-28 Underwood Street, London N1 7JQ. Tel. 0808 800 1111. [www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/transport](http://www.foe.co.uk/campaigns/transport)

Home Zones, provides news on issues relating to home zones, traffic-calmed residential areas. [www.homezonenews.org.uk](http://www.homezonenews.org.uk)

National Society for Clean Air and Environmental Protection helps calculate the impact of transport emissions on the environment, 44 Grand Parade, Brighton BN2 9QA. Tel. 01273-878770. [www.nasca.org.uk](http://www.nasca.org.uk)

Living Streets (The Pedestrians' Association) represents the interests of pedestrians, 31-33 Bondway, London SW8 1SJ. Tel. 020-7820 1010. [www.livingstreets.org.uk](http://www.livingstreets.org.uk)

Rail Future (The Railway Development Society), seeks better rail services and long-term expansion of the network, The Birches, Eye Lane, East Rudham, Norfolk PE31 8RH. Tel. 01485 528088. [www.railfuture.org.uk](http://www.railfuture.org.uk)

Sustrans, develops inter-town and city cycle routes, 2 Cathedral Square, College Green, Bristol BS1 5DD. Tel. 0845 113 0065. [www.sustrans.org.uk](http://www.sustrans.org.uk)

Transport 2000, the national environmental transport body. The Impact Centre, 12-18 Hoxton Street, London N1 6NG. Tel. 020 7613 0743. [www.transport2000.org.uk](http://www.transport2000.org.uk)

## JOIN CHRISTIAN ECOLOGY LINK

Send £18 standard (low income £10), £28 joint/family/corporate, or a donation for church membership (recommended amount £25) to CEL, FREEPOST, SE 8672, 9 Nuthatch Drive, Earley, Reading RG6 5ZZ. Cheques payable to CEL. For more details about CEL, contact CEL, 3 Bond Street, Lancaster LA1 3ER. Tel. 01524 33858. Email [info@christian-ecology.org.uk](mailto:info@christian-ecology.org.uk)

Send for copies of this leaflet to CEL Publications, 40 The Avenue, Roundhay, Leeds LS8 1JG.

Please send a donation to cover cost of printing and postage, or at least an S.A.E.

You are welcome to photocopy it if you acknowledge CEL. May 2006.

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CHRISTIAN  
ECOLOGY LINK



# GREEN TRANSPORT

## Our Responsibility as Christians

Transport plays a part in our work, in our leisure, and in meeting our daily needs. Transport moves goods and materials for manufacture and consumption. However, today's transport systems, based as they are on profit and convenience, have created as many problems as benefits. The Christian Church has only slowly recognised the dangers and suffering associated with the massive increase in the use of cars, lorries, and aeroplanes for transport.

As Christians, we should be concerned not just about the cost and convenience to ourselves but also about the rightness of our actions and their effect on the quality of life for others, including those who do not have access to a car. We are not just responsible for the vehicles we drive ourselves. Our choices as consumers can launch a fleet of lorries and aeroplanes. A Christmas dinner can travel as much as 12,000 miles to our plates.

The decisions we make about how we travel are part of our Christian responsibility to care for God's creation. Pollution, noise, stress and the overuse of raw materials and energy are taking their toll on all of us and the environment. The Earth does not have limitless resources.

## Cars, Lorries and Planes — Road to Ruin?

Road traffic is one of the greatest air polluters: Vehicle exhausts are one of the fastest growing sources of carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>), the principal greenhouse gas contributing to global warming. Global warming is leading to the threat of catastrophic climatic change across the world.

The number of cars on our roads is increasing. 30% of households now own two or more cars. The cost of buying and running a car has fallen in real terms over the past 30 years, while rail and bus fares have climbed. A huge area of land is taken up by roads and car parks.

Freight: 8% of UK CO<sub>2</sub> emissions are from lorries. A quarter of the lorries on our



roads are carrying food. The cost of food miles to the UK, including time lost from congestion, road wear and tear, ill health from pollution and noise, and road crashes is £9 billion a year. Imports account for 95% of fruit and half of all vegetables eaten in the UK. When transported by air this emits even more CO<sub>2</sub> than lorries.

Excessive consumption of energy and raw materials: Petrol and most diesel fuel are derived from oil, a non-renewable resource. Small amounts of bioethanol can be added to petrol, and diesel engines can run on biodiesels, or even processed waste frying oil! But if all vehicles transferred to using these plant based fuels much of the world's crop lands and wild areas would be needed to grow the plants. Recycling material from old cars is increasing but vast amounts of steel are used in car manufacturing.

Congestion is bad for human health and the economy. Congestion charging has cut traffic in central London by 18% and congestion by 30% since February 2003. Cycling has increased by one third. Most of the money raised was spent on improving London's buses.

Health and Safety: 80% of people with asthma say pollution brings on asthma symptoms. In Hull traffic calming and 20 mph zones have been installed at over 100 residential locations. The number of children killed or seriously injured on these streets has been cut by 90%. Speed cameras significantly reduce road traffic collisions and related deaths and injuries in the immediate vicinity of the camera sites.

The school run: In urban areas in 2003 cars taking children to school accounted for 13% of car trips in the morning rush hour, and 21% of car trips at 8.50 am. Walking buses help. Where schools have promoted cycle use, especially for pupils 9-12, cycling has increased fourfold.

Community breakdown: Our increased reliance on cars leads to people driving greater distances between residential areas and shops, workplaces, leisure facilities, hospitals and libraries. It thereby contributes to the breaking up of local neighbourhoods and harms community life.

Aeroplanes contribute to climate change by emitting greenhouse gases. Air travel is more harmful to the climate than car or rail travel per mile covered and is projected to increase rapidly.



## Action Points

We can show Christian responsibility in our travel plans by implementing the following actions when and where, we can. By cutting down on road and air transport we will contribute less to climate change, and save our countryside from being covered in tarmac.

- Whenever you think of making a journey by car ask yourself whether it is really necessary.
- Use alternative transport: Walk, cycle or catch a bus for all journeys of less than two miles if you are able. This also keeps you healthy. For slightly longer journeys travel by cycle or bus, if possible. When going further use the train or coach.
- Rethink your holiday plans to avoid flying. Use the train in the UK and to the continent. If you need to, hire a car at the other end.
- Avoid driving to church if you can. Don't pollute God's environment on your way to worship Him. Does your church have a cycle rack as well as a car park? Maybe you could give someone else a lift if you have to use a car?
- Organise a car-sharing scheme with friends, neighbours or work colleagues.
- If buying a car, buy one with a small engine and high fuel economy. Road tax is now graded according to CO<sub>2</sub> emissions.
- Continue to press the government to give higher priority to an adequately funded public transport system with simplified ticketing and easily accessible information. Urge them to take measures to reduce car and lorry journeys.

- Aim to reduce your car mileage by (for example) 20% a year.
- If looking for a new home aim for one with good public transport facilities to work, school, church and shops.
- On motorways and other 'open' roads drive more safely. Use less fuel by keeping within the legal speed limits. (50 mph is the most energy efficient speed.)
- Drive at 20 mph through residential and shopping areas where possible. (At 20 mph only one pedestrian in 20 is killed in any collision; at 40 mph nearly all are killed.)
- Shop locally and favour locally-produced food. Support local traders and resist the cost and pollution involved in travelling to out-of-town superstores.
- Get together with neighbours and campaign for better local bus and train services.
- Put pressure on your local council to give priority to people rather than vehicles through traffic calming schemes, cycleways, cycle facilities, bus lanes and lorry restrictions. Contact your local transport planning officer, or sustainability officer, through your local council.
- Join the Environmental Transport Association, a road-rescue organisation which is not (unlike the AA and RAC) a member of the British Road Federation. ETA care for cyclists as well. Consider joining a local, regional or national cycling organisation.
- Pray about these issues. Discuss the contents of this leaflet with others in your housegroup and local church. Make a personal or family plan and support each other in carrying it out.