# The Association of British Drivers

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## Press Release – ABD London Region

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## £25 Congestion Charge – Ignorance Personified says the ABD

The Mayor of London, Ken Livingstone has announced that he is to go ahead with a public consultation on a proposed £25 Congestion Charge for some vehicles. This will affect many luxury saloons, sports cars and larger 4x4s but it will also affect many other quite ordinary vehicles.

Those impacted will be those in vehicle Band G (which emit more than 225 gm $CO_2$/km) and those registered prior to March 2001 with engines larger than 3000cc.

The Association of British Drivers (ABD) simply questions why the Mayor has chosen to attack these vehicles. Has he worked out what benefit this will bring in terms of reduced pollution? Well the ABD has and the answer is that the impact will be imperceptible.

As the Mayor has pointed out, only 8% of cars registered in London will be affected, but only 10% of the $CO_2$ emissions in London according to Transport for London are created by private cars. So even if all those car owners instantly stopped using them, the benefit might be only 1%.

In practice, a third might stop driving into London, a third might pay the charge, and a third might switch to a lower emissions vehicle – in the last case they are very unlikely to save more than 50% of emissions as most vehicles in Band G only slightly exceed 225 gm/km and they are likely to switch to vehicles that are just under the limit. So adding all this up, the likely benefit is about 0.5%. Who will notice the difference? Nobody!

In reality some of these luxury car drivers might simply switch to using taxis which again will not provide any benefit because they are some of the most polluting vehicles in London.

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So what other motivation might the Mayor have for introducing such an aggressive tax on a small minority?

Perhaps it is the disastrous economics of the Congestion Charge that means he needs to raise more money from the wealthy? Perhaps it is to divert attention from the failure of the Congestion Charge system to reduce congestion with road traffic speeds now almost back to where they were before he introduced it?

Or perhaps it is because the existing Congestion Charge has not reduced pollution in central London (TfL and the Mayor have claimed that "emissions" have reduced based on their estimates, but when general air pollution is measured on the ground, no benefit is apparent).

The ABD believes that this attempt to tax a small minority in the name of climate change is a typical diversionary tactic of the Mayor when faced with inconvenient facts. Turning the Congestion Charge into an attack on pollution will not divert attention from its failures. The Mayor even manages to blame this summer's floods on the problem of $CO_2$ emissions which is laughable and simply unsubstantiated by any evidence.

The ABD urges everyone to protest against this latest unreasonable and illogical proposal from the Mayor.

For information on the failings of the London Congestion Charge and the real figures for air pollution in London please contact the ABD for a copy of our reports on these subjects.

**For further information, please contact:**

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**About The Association of British Drivers (ABD)**

The ABD is the leading independent organisation which represents the interests of private motorists in the United Kingdom. We campaign to protect the rights of individual road users and believe that road transport is a beneficial and essential element in the UK transport infrastructure. We oppose excessive taxation of motorists and are against tolls and road usage charging. We also campaign for more enlightened road safety policies. The Association is a "not for profit" voluntary organisation which is financially supported primarily by its individual members. More information on the ABD is available from our ABD London web site at www.freedomfordrivers.org