

ON KNIGHTSBRIDGE ASSOCIATION LETTERHEAD

PLEASE CONFIRM RECEIPT: DEFRA, EDE HOUSE AND MAYOR OF LONDON

Our reference: Trencom/DefraMayor/05

The Rt. Hon. David Miliband MP
Secretary of State
Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs
Nobel House
17 Smith Square
London SW1P 3JR

Ken Livingstone
Mayor of London
Greater London Authority
City Hall
The Queen's Walk
More London
London SE1 2AA

By email to: ma_yor@london.gov.uk and david.miliband@defra.gsi.gov.uk (as SOS) and milibandd@parliament.uk (as the Labour Party Member of Parliament for South Shields)

5 January 2007

Dear Secretary of State and Mr Livingstone

Invitation to Pledge support to the Campaign for Clean Air in London

The purpose of this letter is to invite each of you to Pledge your support, as those controlling the most relevant levers of power and as senior members of the Labour Party, to the cross-party "Campaign for Clean Air in London" with its primary objective being **"To achieve urgently World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended standards of air quality throughout London"**. This letter invites simultaneously an identical Pledge from the other main political parties and their key national and London representatives (who are asterisked in the Courtesy Copy list at the end of this letter). We would welcome Pledges from the other organisations copied. We wrote to the Prime Minister on 23 December 2006 inviting him to Pledge his support to the Campaign and its primary objective and await his reply.

Six fundamental principles underpin the Campaign for Clean Air in London which was founded by The Knightsbridge Association in 2006. These are to:

1. **Acknowledge that "Unlimited and free access to clean air of acceptable quality is a fundamental human necessity and right" and "that an unequal distribution of health risks over the population raises concerns of environmental justice and equity"**. The former were the opening words to the Foreword and the latter appeared on page 19 of the WHO's report "Health aspects of air pollution" published in June 2004;
2. **Achieve urgently WHO recommended standards of air quality throughout London (and the United Kingdom)**. With few exceptions, these have been required to be met by January 2010 by legislation since 1999 (and we note that there were widespread breaches of European Union (EU) legal limits for particulate matter (PM₁₀) in London in 2005);
3. **Protect Londoners by increasing substantially public awareness of the serious air**

- pollution problem in London (and elsewhere in the United Kingdom).** Across London, more than four times as many people died in 2005 from the effects of PM₁₀ air pollution as they did from road traffic accidents. Air pollution from nitrogen dioxide (NO₂) in London is getting worse not better;
4. **Treat air pollution holistically, and its two main elements equally robustly in all relevant initiatives, and back annual targets and necessary measures with legislation** (i.e. air quality – mainly PM_{2.5} and PM₁₀, NO₂ and ozone (O₃) – and climate change – mainly carbon dioxide (CO₂)). Sir Nicholas Stern highlighted the importance of this approach on pages 276 to 278 of his recent report. Two examples are the forthcoming Climate Change Bill (for which the Mayor should press for annual targets for air quality as he has done for climate change) and the Environmental Contract (in which Defra should include a Contract for Air with its planned Contracts for Water and Waste);
 5. **Tackle air quality to improve the international competitiveness of London (and the United Kingdom as a whole) by taking tough action in the short term to deliver long term benefits.** The Mayor was right to say in a letter to the Financial Times, on 23 December 2006 titled “Globalisation has brought tremendous benefits to London”, that Londoners are enjoying the benefits of globalisation ... in the quality of their lives”. These benefits are jeopardised by London’s poor air quality. A report by the European Environment Agency titled “Air pollution at street level in European cities” published in 2006 shows, in Figure 4.1 on page 11, that average mean annual NO₂ urban background concentrations in London were third worst of 20 cities behind only Milan and Paris and just ahead of Rome. Unless urgent action is taken to improve air quality in London, the loss of “agglomeration” benefits to London is likely to far outweigh the short term restructuring costs necessary to achieve a healthy environment and underpin sustainable growth in London. Furthermore, if more had been done to achieve air quality targets when they were set in 1999, it would be costing less to take action now. Costs will increase sharply and benefits will fade away the longer that tough action is delayed; and
 6. **Demonstrate the political will necessary to achieve and exceed WHO recommended standards for air quality by taking tangible steps that result quickly in measurable improvements in air quality.** We all know that once the political will exists to tackle air pollution that practical ways of addressing it will be found as they were in the past for sulphur dioxide, leaded petrol and the ozone layer. It really is that simple.

These six fundamental principles underpinned a letter from The Knightsbridge Association to the Department of Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (Defra) dated 25 June 2006 (which can be downloaded from our website), responding to its consultation on a national Air Quality Strategy, which sought 12 commitments to improve air quality in London. That letter was supported by more than 20 community groups, representing most of Central London, with the majority of them seeking the same 12 commitments in respect of their own areas. We are delighted that leading London politicians Angie Bray AM (Leader of the Conservatives in the Greater London Assembly (GLA)), Mark Field (Conservative MP) and Darren Johnson (Green and Chairman of the Environment Committee of the GLA) made early public statements supporting our Campaign.

We request respectfully that you each reply personally please to this letter in your capacity as Secretary of State (or as a senior Labour Party MP if necessary to satisfy Defra etiquette) and Mayor of London respectively. We look forward to receiving also your responses to our letters to you dated 12 November and 3 December respectively.

To demonstrate the political will to improve air quality in London (and across the UK) please:

- i. **Pledge your support publically to the Campaign for Clean Air in London and meet us;**
- ii. **Strengthen substantially the proposed Low Emission Zone (LEZ) in London, if necessary, following a third consultation.** Instead of letting air pollution get worse in London, please consider including in the LEZ scheme: all vehicles and banning some; much faster adoption of new Euro emission standards and NO_x abatement measures; differential taxation; tough enforcement; and link these measures to road pricing. We will respond in full shortly to the formal consultation on the LEZ;
- iii. **Apply the full weight of your respective organisations' resources to achieve in the new EU Directive on Air Pollution a compromise that represents the tightest position taken so far formally by each of the Council of Ministers, the Environment Commission and the European Parliament in respect of each element of the draft legislation.** In a matter of life and death for many, European citizens have the right to expect nothing less than the "highest common denominator" outcome. The other key measure of your success will be whether you can achieve more still by ensuring that the new Directive includes a "backstop" date for the implementation of the legislation and shorter deadlines than the highest common denominator position. We will publish a simple "scorecard" in coming weeks; and
- iv. **Finally, we urge you to identify international best practices on air quality management, to back them with robust legislation and to ensure their rapid implementation throughout London.**

Please see also our website "Air quality: Campaign for Clean Air in London" on the BBC Action Network at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/dna/actionnetwork/G1956> where this letter has been published today. In due course, we will publish periodically on the BBC Action Network a list of those politicians (i.e. those asterisked at the end of this letter) who have supported the Campaign for Clean Air in London, been approached but not yet confirmed their support or declined to support the Campaign. We hope, sincerely, that your Pledge will be on the list.

Thank you for taking seriously our concerns about air pollution in London and giving the issues we raise your particular attention. We recognise that you are already taking many steps to improve air quality in London.

We look forward to hearing from you.

With best wishes,
Yours sincerely,

Simon Birkett
Chair
Transport and Environment Committee
The Knightsbridge Association
on behalf of the Campaign for Clean Air in London

By hand to:

Winston Fletcher, Chairman, The Knightsbridge Association

Carol Seymour-Newton, Honorary Secretary, The Knightsbridge Association

Note: Those invited to Pledge support for the Campaign for Clean Air in London are asterisked “*” below. Those highlighted in bold and with a “+” were early supporters

CC: * The Rt. Hon. Tony Blair MP, Prime Minister

* Conservative Party

* Green Party

* Labour Party

* Liberal Democrat Party

Stavros Dimas, Commissioner for the Environment DG

Marianne Klingbeil, Head of Unit, Env. C. 3 – Clean Air & Transport

Dr Martin Williams, Head of Air and Environment Quality Division, Defra

Various London Amenity Societies, Business Groups and Media Organisations

John Brewster OBE, Chairman, Port Health and Environmental Services Committee,

Corporation of London

Patricia Brown, Chief Executive, Central London Partnership

Jenny Bates, London Regional Campaigns Co-ordinator, Friends of the Earth

Tim Hockney, Executive Director, London First

Rachel Goodison, Executive Director, London First

Sir Roy McNulty, Chairman, Olympic Delivery Authority

James Bidwell, Chief Executive, Visit London

* Peter Ainsworth MP, Shadow Secretary of State, Defra, Conservative

The Rt. Hon. Douglas Alexander MP, Secretary of State, Department for Transport, Labour

* Greg Barker MP, Shadow Minister for the Environment, Conservative

* Ben Bradshaw MP, Minister for Air Quality, Labour

Alistair Carmichael MP, Shadow Transport Secretary, Liberal Democrat

Mrs Gwyneth Dunwoody MP, Chairman of the Transport Committee, Labour

+ Mark Field MP, Conservative

Chris Grayling MP, Shadow Secretary of State for Transport, Conservative

* Chris Huhne MP, Shadow Environment Secretary, Liberal Democrat

* Ian Pearson MP, Defra, Minister for Climate Change, Labour

* The Rt. Hon. Sir Malcolm Rifkind QC MP, Conservative

Tim Yeo MP, Chairman Environmental Audit Committee, Conservative

* Gerard Batten MEP, London, Independence

* John Bowis MEP, London, Conservative

Chris Davies MEP, Liberal Democrat

* Robert Evans MEP, London, Labour

* Mary Honeyball MEP, London, Labour

* Syed Kamall MEP, London, Conservative

* Ms Jean Lambert MEP, London, Green Party

* Baroness Ludford MEP, London, Liberal Democrat

Linda McAvan MEP, Labour

* Claude Moraes MEP, London, Labour

* Charles Tannock MEP, London, Conservative

* Sian Berry, Principal Speaker, Green

+ **Angie Bray AM, Leader of the Conservative Group**

* Jenny Jones AM, Leader of the Green Group

+ **Darren Johnson AM, Chair of the Environment Committee, GLA, Green**

* Mike Tuffrey AM, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group

* Councillor Sir Simon Milton, Leader of the Council, WCC, Conservative

* Councillor Alan Bradley, Chair, Go Green Board, WCC, Conservative

* Councillor Merrick Cockell, Leader of the Council, RBKC, Conservative

* Councillor Daniel Moylan, Deputy Leader, RBKC, Conservative

* Councillor Frances Blois, WCC, Conservative

* Councillor Tony Devenish, WCC, Conservative

* Councillor Philippa Roe, WCC, Conservative

* Councillor Dr Iain Hanham, RBKC, Conservative

* Councillor Margot James, RBKC, Conservative

* Councillor Mrs Shireen Ritchie, RBKC, Conservative

Guy Denington, Team Manager, Environment Quality Unit, RBKC Sarah Legge, GLA Principal Policy Adviser – Air Quality

Martin Low, Director of Transportation, WCC Mike Le Roy, WCC

Mahmood Siddiqi, Chief Traffic Engineer, RBKC

London Low Emission Zone Consultation Team