

David Higgins  
Chief Executive  
Olympic Delivery Authority  
London 2012  
One Churchill Place  
Canary Wharf  
London E14 5LN

21 April 2007

Dear Mr Higgins

## **Achieving sustainably at least World Health Organisation recommended standards of air quality throughout London by 2012 Olympics**

I am writing on behalf of the Campaign for Clean Air in London to ask the Olympic Delivery Authority (ODA) to commit, as part of its wider commitment for London 2012 to be the greenest Games in modern times, to London achieving sustainably at least World Health Organisation (WHO) recommended standards of air quality throughout London by no later than the London 2012 Summer Olympics.

The Campaign for Clean Air in London has received support from the Mayor of London, leading politicians from all four political parties in London as well as leading business and community groups including the Central London Partnership, London First and The Knightsbridge Business Group. We have recently received a pledge of support from the National Society for Clean Air and the Environment. Our campaign website is shown in the letterhead above.

As you will know, London has very serious air pollution problems. In the busiest streets, air pollution is two to three times WHO recommended levels. The Mayor of London has estimated that, for example, some 1,031 people died prematurely in London in 2005 due to particulate matter (PM<sub>10</sub>) exposure which is more than four times the number that died from road traffic accidents. In a consultation document published at the end of last year, in connection with the proposed Low Emission Zone, Transport for London noted that 1,370,000 people and 625,000 people in London in 2008 and 2012 respectively would be exposed to an annual mean level of nitrogen dioxide (NO<sub>2</sub>) of over 40 µg/m<sup>3</sup> unless further action is taken to improve air quality. This level is the WHO's and the European Union's maximum recommended annual mean for human health.

WHO recommended standards of air quality have largely been required to be met by January 2010 (or earlier) by European Union legislation since 1999. London has breached European Union legal limits for particulate matter in each of the last two years and it is possible that the European Commission will bring the matter before the European Court of Justice under Article 226 of the European Community Treaty.

As if to emphasise the importance of this matter for London, the International Olympic Committee (IOC) Coordination Commission held a press conference in Beijing on Thursday 19 April after concluding three days of crucial meetings and site visits in connection the preparations for the 2008 Summer Olympic Games.

**At the press conference and in the associated press release the Commission's Chairman, Hein Verbruggen, highlighted that in review meetings on the environment during the visit that Commission members were briefed on contingency plans being drawn up to ensure optimal air quality in August 2008:**

[http://www.olympic.org/uk/news/media\\_centre/press\\_release\\_uk.asp?release=2130](http://www.olympic.org/uk/news/media_centre/press_release_uk.asp?release=2130)

**Chairman Verbruggen commented that "numerous completed initiatives are serving as best practices for Beijing residents.**

**"No-one can deny that the backdrop of such a rapidly developing economy has brought challenges which may need contingency plans so that top level athletic competition is not adversely affected," Verbruggen said. "We are encouraged, therefore, to see the appropriate plans being drawn up to tackle this. It won't be the first time such measures have been used during Olympic Games – Los Angeles and Seoul are two examples where air quality measures were successfully adopted."**

**In addition to permanent benefits through the creation of green areas, such as the 680- hectare forestry project near the airport and Olympic venues, and strict reductions in industrial pollution emissions, Beijing government officials have also reported an initiative to reduce traffic circulation during the Games. Many of the initiatives are part of comprehensive Games bid objectives established by BOCOG and local authorities in 2001 to ensure that athletes of the world are able to compete in the best possible conditions."**

London has the worst air quality in the UK and amongst the worst in Europe being perhaps in the worst three to five of its large cities. Unless air pollution is reduced sharply and quickly, London will clearly fail to deliver the greenest Games of modern times. It will not be acceptable for London, as a major city in a leading developed country, to deliver less than WHO recommended standards of air quality for the world's athletes. Please will the ODA therefore give the Pledge we are seeking and press for the necessary action to be taken.

I look forward to hearing from you (at the email address below).

With best wishes.

Yours sincerely

Simon Birkett  
Principal Contact  
Campaign for Clean Air in London

By hand:

Winston Fletcher, Chair, The Knightsbridge Association  
Carol Seymour-Newton, Honorary Secretary, The Knightsbridge Association

Cc:

Hein Verbruggen, Chairman, International Olympic Committee Coordination Commission

Sir Roy McNulty, Acting Chairman, Olympic Delivery Authority  
Ken Livingstone, Mayor of London  
Sian Berry, Principal Speaker and Green Party candidate for Mayor of London  
The Rt. Hon. David Miliband MP, Secretary of State for Defra

## **ORGANISATIONS**

Jenny Bates, London Regional Campaigns Co-ordinator, Friends of the Earth  
James Bidwell, Chief Executive, Visit London  
John Brewster OBE, Chairman, Port Health and Environmental Services Committee, Corporation of London  
Patricia Brown, Chief Executive, Central London Partnership  
Nick Fairholm, Transport for London  
Tim Hockney, Executive Director, London First  
Professor Frank Kelly, Kings College London  
Sarah Legge, GLA Principal Policy Adviser – Air Quality  
Blake Ludwig, Campaign Director, Alliance Against Urban 4x4s  
Paul McLoughlin, UK General Manager, Zipcar  
Philip Mulligan, Acting Chief Executive, National Society for Clean Air and Environment  
Derek Picot, Chairman, The Knightsbridge Business Group

## **LEADING POLITICIANS**

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  
Angie Bray AM, Leader of the Conservative Party, GLA  
Tony Arbour AM, Conservative  
Richard Barnes AM, Conservative  
Robert Blackman AM, Conservative  
Brian Coleman AM, Conservative  
Roger Evans AM, Conservative  
Elizabeth Howlett AM, Conservative

Bob Neill AM, Conservative  
Andrew Pelling AM, Conservative  
Jenny Jones AM, Leader of the Green Party, GLA  
Darren Johnson AM, Chair of the Environment Committee, GLA, Green  
Len Duvall AM, Leader of the Labour Party  
Jeanette Arnold AM, Labour  
John Biggs AM, Labour  
Nicky Gavron AM, Labour  
Joanne McCartney AM, Labour  
Valerie Shawcross AM, Labour  
Murad Qureshi AM, Labour  
Mike Tuffrey AM, Leader of the Liberal Democrat Group, GLA  
Dee Doocey AM, Liberal Democrat  
Sally Hamwee AM, Liberal Democrat  
Geoff Pope AM, Liberal Democrat  
The Lord Tope, AM, Liberal Democrat  
Peter Hulme Cross AM, One London Group, GLA  
Damien Hockney AM, One London Group, GLA  
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

#### **LOCAL GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS**

Guy Denington, Team Manager, Environment Quality Unit, RBKC  
Martin Low, Director of Transportation, WCC  
Mike LeRoy, WCC  
Mahmood Siddiqi, Chief Traffic Engineer, RBKC