

Edinburgh Trams--- good for the residents and Council taxpayers OR tourists?

PRESS RELEASE –

Residents worried about the troubled Edinburgh tram system have found figures buried in a consultants report TO the council that showed that in 2003 the council were told by their own experts that from the start vast numbers of homes across the whole of Edinburgh would be worse off in terms of pollution, noise and traffic congestion BECAUSE of the tram becoming operational.

- **TIE were told at the start by their own expert consultants that 134,000 homes would be worse off by 2026 - compared to 2001 - EVEN WITH the planned tram scheme in place**
- **Yet the council is still broadcasting this as a scheme that makes things better --when in fact figures the council have hidden show operating it may result in traffic pollution much worse in 2026 WITH the system than WITHOUT it.**

Edinburgh residents are desperately trying to get the council to recognise the proposed Tram system is now so flawed only a total reappraisal can be sure of salvaging something even at this stage.

The council's own figures show that when comparing 2001 with 2011 with NO TRAM system over 238,000 households in Edinburgh would be better off in terms of air quality.

Why? Because vehicle and fuel technology was expected to produce this result even with NO TRAMS at all.

By 2026 comparing the effects of NOT building the tram system at all ,with going ahead and building it as planned the experts said in their own report the system would bring ‘ a minor positive impact’, In terms of air pollution

But initial figures produced by concerned residents living in the first few roads to experience traffic being funnelled from the former major cross city traffic routes—indicate that figures are already far worse than the council experts said they would be, back in 2003.

When this effect spreads across more and more residential areas the tram system will be seen to have exposed more residents to increased air pollution ---not reduced it.

By then it will be too late.

Spokesman for the group, Ashley Lloyd, has gathered together the data that shows the streets and schools that could be affected across Edinburgh, and far more severely than originally envisaged.

He says: “We are desperate to get someone, anyone, at the Council, in Tie, or in Holyrood to just start to talk openly about the plans as they stand.

“Because so much has changed since the original case for the trams was being prepared----including the decision to remove heavy vehicles from main roads and force them to use residential streets----- the present cash crisis actually gives the City an opportunity to re-examine what exactly we can afford now and what exactly the effects of that will really be on the citizens.

“It’s fallen to us to do this because we are the first to be affected; but we are far from the only ones--- the council’s own figures show this in their report back in 2003.

“ Far from being an enormous and inevitable ‘Green win’ for the City the Tram was always predicted to be never better than very marginal---and for many, many thousands of households it was always known it would be positively worse.”

“We can still change course and produce a transport system that benefits the City and the people who live in it instead of doggedly persisting with a scheme that now looks more likely, using the Council’s own projections, to do more bad than good.”

Allan Alstead, another concerned resident said: “The worst thing is that throughout the last few months we feel as if we, and everyone else, are simply being ignored by the council supposed to represent us---and worked against by the council managers supposed to be employed by us!”

“What we keep saying isn’t drawn from thin air; it comes from the council’s own figures----- they knew at the beginning that tens of thousands of households across Edinburgh would be worse off in terms of air particulate pollution because of the tram being built because their own experts told them this in an expensively commissioned report.”

“They know now that things have only got worse since then---so the effects will be even worse.”

“The way they are trying to ignore and sideline our honestly held concerns is exactly the way they are dealing with similar honestly held concerns from many other people..”

“Everything has changed since the late nineties and early years of this century, so ordinary common sense shows there must come a point when carrying on regardless just isn't an option.”

“Right now all we want is the council to stop hiding in the bunker and for councillors to just come out into the open and start talking honestly about where we can all go from here instead of hiding behind excuses.”

“There are some enormously important decisions to be made in the next few weeks but the worrying signs at present are the TIE managers and council committee members closest to the project are going to try and continue down the same disastrous course as they have until now---and the councillors elected to oversee them are going to let them do it.”

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