

In this book club, the host discussed a variety of topics brought out in the book with the panel and delegates. A transcript of the questions & comments sent in by delegates is available below, alongside the results of the in-session polls we conducted.

1) Wood Stoves

Poll Question: Should wood-burning be banned in urban areas to reduce air pollution?

- Yes- totally 41%
- Yes, except in modern wood-burning stoves 28%
- No 13%
- Don't know 19%

Delegate Comments

- Do modern stoves scrub particulates?
- Out of interest my wood burner never produced ash. Apparently it only does this if you use coal, even smokeless coal!! I mean ash in the flue that needed to be cleaned out.
- Modern wood-burning stoves will still emit particulates, but less than those without any emission control.
- I have a wood burning stove, but not used for over two years since we upgraded our windows, insulated walls and loft, and improved our (gas) central heating system.
- Wood burning stoves / open fires could be used as an alternative to GCH for those in fuel poverty - economic issues matter if the banning of these.
- What about wood chip and biomass boilers in terms of pollution? I assume not as bad as household appliances? i.e. not domestic wood burners, the large ones in schools, businesses, hospitals etc?
- We mention wood burning, but BBQs are very popular, and they emit loads of particulates!!

2) Car transport

Delegate Comments

- Diesel cars are being taken off the roads with the new MOTs. Why are all the white vans belching black smoke still allowed... Very noticeable after reading the book.
- Electric cars are not a solution, not only because of the tyres but also because the electricity still needs to come from somewhere
- In France e cars use to be referred to nuclear vehicles- apparently. Hence depends where the electricity comes from
- Electricity uses 2.5 times as much primary fuel per kW. So only "clean" if the electricity generation is clean...
- Electric vehicles are inevitable (hydrogen fuel cells longer term) so we should be thinking about mitigating the pollution impacts asap. Moving people to public transport and active travel is the other angle of course

- what I wonder is the CO₂e from the manufacture of an e car vs continuing to use an old car (old car probably better to run it into the ground?)
- Electric vehicles do create particulates but they don't produce NO_x and GHGs (assuming clean energy supply and not including their production!), so still significantly better than fossil fuel vehicles..
- brake pad and road erosion are the same in e or petrol cars (though e cars might be heavier? therefore more erosion)
- How dangerous are the tyre generated particulates relative to diesel particulates?
- Important question on the particulates from tyres - how bad are these compared with diesel particulates? Are there solutions to this (e.g. different compounds)? (as electric vehicles start to replace fossil fuel ones)?
- My organisation is part of the global PLP (Plastics Loss Partnership). Tiny rubber particles from our distribution fleet is one of our largest losses... This has also made us think about brake dust, and avoiding braking by using sensor controlled engine deceleration!
- Surely there must be technical fixes on the tyres/ brakes aspect?

3) Planning system

Delegate Comments

- The European NEC (National Emissions Ceiling) Directive and its offshoot implementation regulations should do a good job over the next little while.
- Also concerned that the planning system seems to take no account of air pollution that will be generated by development that generates more traffic. Effectively planning to fail as far as air pollution is concerned.
- Also 20mph zones. Traffic free town centres. Etc.
- decentralise our work will reduce travel- only employ locals?
- Good point on school run. Our local authority now charges £500 per year per pupil to take them to school by bus. So it's cheaper to drive them there for most parents.
- I am very concerned about air pollution in my area and about how the local authority seems to be avoiding monitoring so it doesn't have to spend money on more expensive monitoring and ultimately declaring an AQMA
- I live next to an airport. When the wind is in the wrong direction, you can actually taste the kerosene in the air...
- In Leeds the CAZ doesn't include costs for private vehicles.
- school just up the road from me and many leave engines on- needs to be more legislation (like other eu countries) such as turning engines off
- We've found that our Local Authority doesn't take citizens data seriously - there are various criteria people need to follow and adjustments that need to be made correctly. Not easy...
- What about non road mobile machinery on construction sites sponsored by GLA

4) Further Information

- Historical comment : I recall hearing that the West end of all UK towns has been the area of preference for the wealthy to build, because our usual westerly winds would blow town smoke away . With a quick search, I cannot find a source to confirm this, but anecdotally it makes sense, when I think of the small Tudor, Georgian, Victorian market towns I know.
- We see air pollution as a parallel battle and wouldn;t promote air polluting technologies as the main way ahead for CC
- Comment: Very interesting, I never thought of these issues and this webinar has brought my focus on hidden issues. But I am still not sure that the book has addressed effective or practical solutions. But I agree that the book is leading us towards the right path to ponder and care for our future or children's future in relation to Environment.