

# Save Planet Manchester

This third and final article under LGF's latest campaign 'Go Green' in conjunction with Manchester City Council looks at the environmental and personal benefits of driving less, walking and cycling more together with using more public transport links around the city. **Jeni Quirke** reports.

**UNFORTUNATELY, CARS AREN'T THE HEALTHIEST OF MACHINES AS WE ALL KNOW. THEY PRODUCE SEVERAL POLLUTANTS AND TOXICS WHICH CAN CAUSE CANCER AND THEIR CARBON DIOXIDE (CO2) AUTO EMISSIONS CONTRIBUTE TO THE ENVIRONMENTAL PROBLEMS OF ACID RAIN AND GLOBAL WARNING WHICH ARE SLOWLY KILLING OUR PLANET.**

Today there are more than 33 million cars in the UK and that's not including the millions of vans, motorbikes and scooters around too.

Unfortunately scientists haven't yet worked out how to run cars petrol free or on water - instead they're spending their time changing the sexuality of flies or making beer holding bras! So at this rate we might have to wait a lifetime before we see our new eco-friendly vehicles.

Even if it is a lifetime, we should still not ignore the problem of cars and the effects they are

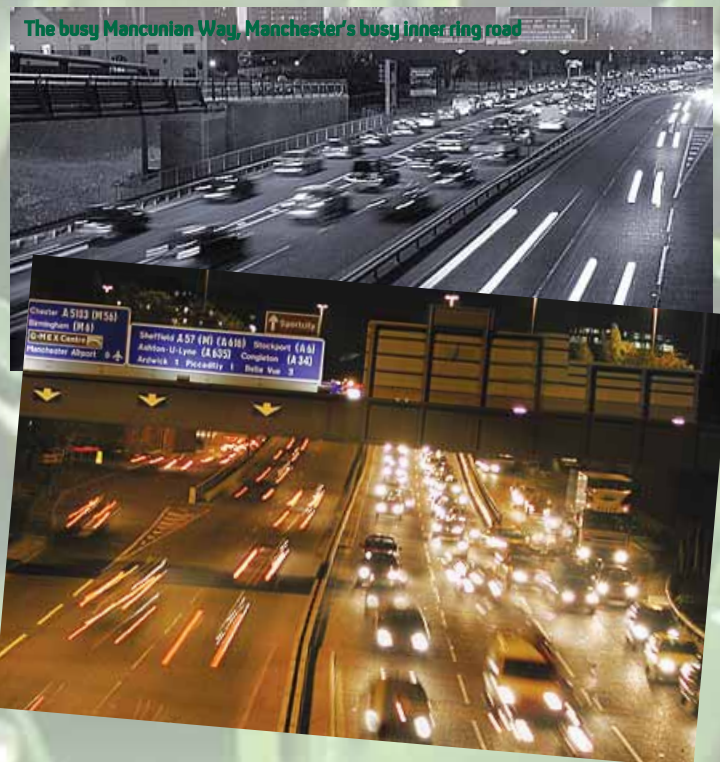
having in society and on the environment. There's lots we can do to save the planet while we wait for our water-powered motors.

The first would be to consider reducing the amount of times you use the car out on the road. Next time you're just about to drive the 0.1 mile to the corner shop, just stop and think whether you could walk it instead. And, also think about the calories you would burn off making that little walk together with the fumes you would save the planet from...

Did you know that nearly a third of the UK's total greenhouse gas emissions come from transport, and it is the only sector in which those emissions are growing?

## CAR SHARING

A lot of us do actually need to use our cars on a daily basis and that's usually down to bad public transport links. However, even here we can be finding ways to use the car less, save money and still get to where we're going on time. More than 80% of people



who drive to work do so on their own, yet many live in the same town or area.

Think about it - two colleagues who both live within a mile from each other but use their own cars for the thirty mile drive - madness! A simple partnership of car-sharing could be the key to half the road emissions and congestion times while saving money and even making friends.

If for any reason car sharing isn't an option for you then you can still use your car and be kinder on the planet through greener driving.

## PUBLIC TRANSPORT

Buses, metros and trains - these are all forms of public transport in Greater Manchester they are readily accessible for the majority of people.

Unfortunately not every street has a bus stop and not every town has a metro or train station but for most of us a public transport link is only five or ten minutes away.

## DID YOU KNOW?

Greater Manchester has a rail network of 142 route miles with 98 stations, forming a central hub to the North West rail network. Train services are provided by private operators and run on the national rail network which is owned and managed by Network Rail. If you wish to contact any of these companies directly, refer to our contact list.

Information for train journeys within the Greater Manchester County can be obtained from [www.gmpte.com](http://www.gmpte.com)



**Exhaust fumes - a big cause of pollution today.**



The new bus station supporting commuters near the Northern Quarter in Manchester

Using public transport isn't always the most pleasant of experiences, especially during peak hours but this form of transport does have its plus points. The first is money. If you add up the petrol and parking tickets you buy each month and compare it to a monthly bus or

train ticket you're sure to be saving yourself a little bit of cash.

Think about the last time you were stuck in traffic – probably yesterday knowing Manchester city centre, bumper to bumper until you go to work?

Well by using the train or metro there's usually no congestion on the line, and you can sit back, read your book or paper, listen to your ipod or radio and take in Manchester's unique scenery on the way into work.

On average 56 people will board a bus. On average two people will use a car. Do the math! Public transport isn't for everyone but with the increasing cost of petrol, cars and car tax it certainly does provide an opportunity to save money and help save the planet.

And soon Manchester could also be home to congestion charging, which would mean even more car travel costs – up to an extra £5 a day!

Although, hopefully if congestion charging is introduced then more parts of Manchester will become home to Metro links and public transport will be better for everyone.

### CYCLING

Don't like buses and trains, then how about cycling to work each day? Ok, so it may not be very appealing in the winter months

but we are approaching summer and cycling would offer a great free way to get to work, keep fit and even get a tan!

After the initial and one-off outlay to purchase your bicycle from around £60-£250 you could travel free to work everyday saving yourself hundreds or even thousands of pounds every year or summer!

Of course, this option is only really available to people who don't live too far away from work and yes it may take you a little longer in the morning but there's lots of benefits that make it worth while.



Fume free - Manchester's Metrolink service

## GO GREEN

The GMPTA has been progressing the mainstream environmental agenda since 2000. Major initiatives have included:

- Promoting the environmental advantages of public transport.
- Developing an Environmental Policy.
- Developing procedures and Standing Orders to ensure that environmental issues are considered in GMPTA activities, including scheme development.
- Participating fully in the production of the Greater Manchester Air Quality Action Plan
- Various initiatives in partnership with operators to reduce pollution from buses
- GMPTA in-house environmental initiatives including a Green Travel Plan waste minimisation and staff awareness and training.

Benefits that not only improve your health and your pocket but also help improve your environment, your roads and your planet. So do something good this year and help Manchester and the planet as a whole by **Going Green.**

## GREENER DRIVING

The way you drive and handle your car can also affect the amount of fuel you use and the amount of emissions that your car produces.

**You can reduce these by:**

- Driving more smoothly.
- Shifting gears at the right time.
- Turning the engine off when waiting for someone.
- Driving at the right tyre pressures.
- Sticking to the speed limit.
- Removing unnecessary weight and roof racks.
- Using air-conditioning and other on-board electrical devices less to lessen fuel consumption.
- Next time you buy a car choose a make/model with a more fuel efficient engine.