

NEWS RELEASE



Double Trouble for 4x4 Drivers: Mancunians vote to double parking charges for "gas guzzling" 4x4s

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release:
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Photos of members of Alliance Against Urban 4x4s handing the survey over to Cllr. Neil Swannick on the Town Hall steps are available on our website [2].

The Alliance Against Urban 4x4s [1] today published survey results indicating that the vast majority of Mancunians would like to see the drivers of 4x4s and other "gas guzzling" vehicles financially penalised for bringing them into the city. The results have been presented to Manchester City Council with a request that the council acts on this research.

Large off-road vehicles (often referred to as 4x4s or SUVs) typically consume double the amount of fuel of a typical family saloon, for any given journey. As a result they release double the amount carbon dioxide, the greenhouse gas most directly responsible for climate change. The Alliance Against Urban 4x4s is urging the council to introduce punitive parking charges so that those drivers whose vehicles produce double the pollution pay double the amount to park in the city.

The group surveyed shoppers and workers in the city centre across a Sunday and Monday and asked them "Should parking charges be doubled for 4x4s?" 83% of passers-by voted that drivers of gas guzzling vehicles SHOULD pay double, with only 17% of respondents saying that they shouldn't.

Dave Coleman, joint co-ordinator of Manchester Friends of the Earth [3] and spokesperson for the Alliance Against Urban 4x4s, commented:

"Climate change is now universally acknowledged as the greatest threat our generation faces. We urge Manchester City Council to take an active lead in discouraging the use of these highly polluting vehicles.

"These vehicles continue to be deeply unpopular and whenever they are given the opportunity the vast majority of the public express distaste for the misuse of these vehicles

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by those who drive them in urban areas. This survey simply reinforces for the Council how popular any initiatives they take to exclude these vehicles from the City will be."

Manchester City Councillor Neil Swannick, Executive Member for Planning and the Environment, responded:

"People are becoming increasingly aware of the effects of carbon emissions in creating climate change. The Government now encourages car users to buy cars which produce low carbon emissions by reducing car tax.

"In Manchester we are aiming to reduce carbon emissions at a rate exceeding UK Kyoto targets as part of our goal of becoming the UK's Greenest City.

"I am not sure we can implement what Friends of the Earth are asking us to do, but I welcome their work on highlighting this important issue and suggest to the owners of these 'gas guzzlers' that they consider switching to a more environmentally responsible form of transport."

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Notes to Editors

1. The Alliance Against Urban 4x4s (www.stopurban4x4s.org.uk) is a grassroots umbrella organisation with the aim of uniting environment, consumer, road safety groups and concerned individuals in an alliance against the growth of urban Four Wheel Drive vehicles on our streets. For more information about the kind of people supporting the campaign see www.stopurban4x4s.org.uk/supporters.htm
2. Photos are available at <http://www.manchesterfoe.org.uk/transport/survey.htm>
3. The Alliance is supported by Manchester Friends of the Earth, a prominent campaign group, raising awareness and lobbying for policy changes at a local, regional, national and international level. The group consists entirely of volunteers, and its campaigns are funded by membership fees and individual donations. Up-to-date information is available on their website: <http://www.manchesterfoe.org.uk>. Manchester Friends of the Earth is part of a national network of local groups, affiliated to the national organisation (further information can be found at <http://www.foe.co.uk>).

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