

particulate pollution

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[DSC_2911](#) Last week I wrote a short blog on what I thought the three most pressing environmental problems were. For all three I gave a brief assessment on the will to deal with them. In no particular order I decided to deal with particulate pollution first. This is in part due to several things I read in the paper. The first is that air pollution is linked to changes in heart structure. Its been known for many years that particulate pollution causes heart disease now a [recent study](#) may suggest why. The second is my councils potential new transport strategy. Its obvious that most pollution is caused particulates from transport (mostly diesel) with some contribution from other combustion such as open fires/wood burners and gas central heating systems. The political problem is considerable. Governments/councils are frightened to take on the motoring lobby. They have hidden behind blaming wood burners. They have also promised a transition to electric vehicles. Wood burners make a contribution (or at least wood burning does, it may be open fires) although there are many more cars on the road than wood burners or open fires. Switching to electric vehicles will help but 50% of the particulate pollution comes from the tyres/brakes/road etc so this is a help but not a total solution. Also as we pointed out in our [book](#) electric vehicles don't solve the sheer unpleasant nature of traffic infested cities. Edinburgh council is bravely preparing to take on motorists with a plan to severely restrict cars in the centre of the city thus reclaiming the streets for cyclists and pedestrians, as well as public transport. Edinburgh is a growing city with an increasing number of tourists. At the moment the city is rammed full of cars (most driven by local residents but also some tourists). The only solution to particulate pollution and traffic volume is to ban cars from the city centre, encourage cycling and improve public transport. The council is going to start with a series of car free Sundays (this will affect my church so I will see the effects first hand) and consultate the public on further measures to extend the ban more permanently. Neil

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