



1st UITP SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT CONFERENCE

" Sustainable Cities and Public Transport Bringing Quality to Life"

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Peter Black

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An inconvenient truth, or a convenient truth?

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1. Biographical note

Peter Black is Environmental Projects Controller at GMPT, an organisation responsible for local public transport in a city region of about 2.5 million people based on Manchester.

He has worked on planning, environmental and public transport issues in public, voluntary and academic sectors for 20 years, and has also served as an elected local representative.

He likes climbing dangerous mountains and arguing with people

2. Abstract

Greater Manchester first became interested in sustainable development through the need to improve air quality. This has had measurable economic, social and environmental benefits. Poor quality buses were originally seen as a problem, but a well-established programme to improve air quality in general, and specifically reduce emissions from buses means that public transport is increasingly seen as a key component of sustainable development.

Greater Manchester, and two further case studies – Delhi, and the British Conservative Party - suggest that major advances towards sustainable development are underpinned by many people taking the small steps of collecting evidence, setting targets, developing and testing technology, and solving problems.

Al Gore – former vice president of the United States has called climate change an 'Inconvenient Truth'. The contribution that public transport can make towards sustainable development is a 'Convenient Truth'. We must seize the opportunity.