

## Fossil fuel advertising and air pollution

Does the continued acceptance of adverts for fossil fuels, frequent flights and SUVs on the public transport network undermine your positive action to clean up London's air?

## Greens accuse the Mayor of “hypocrisy” in the battle over fossil fuel advertising

The Mayor of London, Sir Sadiq Khan, resisted calls to ban advertisements promoting fossil fuels on the TfL network at the Mayor's Question Time.

He said it would be “an issue of practicalities,” as he needs to seek national guidance from the Government, as well as that of the Advertising Standards Authority (ASA).

Adverts on the public transport advocate for regular flights and the use of SUVs, which Caroline Russell, Green AM, called “hypocrisy”, considering Khan's Net Zero commitments.

“Car companies across the UK are spending about £500 million a year. They can afford to do a station domination. They can cover a whole Tube station in adverts, including the gate line, promoting the idea that business is persuading people to buy cars and to use cars when we are living in a really crowded, dense city where, in the interests of keeping the buses moving, you need fewer people to be driving cars on the roads,” Russell said.



The Mayor compared it with previous advertising restrictions for high-fat, salt, and sugar foods and non-alcoholic drinks. However, those used the nutrient profile model from the Food Standards Agency.

He said: “There are no equivalent government standards that define a high-carbon category for advertising, making it difficult to implement a similar policy in a consistent

way.” However, he suggested he would review the TfL advertising policy to see if there is room for improvement.

In response to that, Alessandro Georgiou, Con AM, called C40 Cities, which wants to ban advertising for fossil fuels, “a woke, nasty, neo-Marxist organisation of which [Khan is] Co-Chair.”

He said that he believed “they want to ban meat, they want to ban cars, they want to overtax workers, they want pay-per-mile, they want to ban flights, and they want to ban certain clothing.”

However, the Mayor explained that reducing emissions within C40 has helped create “21 million good green jobs.”

Zack Polanski, Green AM, followed up on this answer, asking Khan about the Rosebank oil field, which the Government will decide on the following week. He accused the Mayor of avoiding his question again, as in the last Mayor’s Question Time [9 October 2025]. Khan told him: “Sites that have licences already granted should go ahead, but no new licences should be given.”

“Is it not hypocritical to have very good words on the climate crisis but then, when I am asking you a very specific question about a very tangible oil field that this Government is potentially going to extend a licence to, which will cause catastrophic devastation, for you as Mayor of London not to take your role as a climate leader,” Polanski said.

Khan then emphasised the importance of shifting from fossil fuels to renewable energy sources, such as solar, wind, and nuclear. Polanski, in turn, criticised his comment by arguing that there was still too much reliance on oil and gas.

