

Mayoral candidate Jenny Jones leads protest for better air quality

Green Party London Mayoral candidate Jenny Jones will lead a direct action protest to demand better air quality for London. Hundreds of cyclists and pedestrians will leave Soho Square in Central London at 19:00 on Wednesday 13th July. They will converge on one of London's busiest junctions before staging a DIE-IN to shut the road to traffic.

A group of seventy cyclists will block the road whilst hundreds of pedestrians cross into the middle of the junction. Britney Spears's single 'Toxic' will be the signal for the protesters to cough and pretend to die.

The protesters plan to play dead for 29 minutes, symbolic of the 29,000 premature deaths attributed to poor air quality in the UK – nearly 5% of all annual UK deaths [1].

Doctors and nurses will check the pulses of the protesters and mark the position of their bodies with chalk. At the end of the 29 minutes the protesters hope to get up and walk away, leaving white chalked silhouettes of their bodies on the road.

Jenny Jones, the Green Party candidate for London's Mayoral elections, said:

“Getting clean air is rapidly emerging as the number one environmental and public health issue for Londoners. This is hardly surprising when both the government and Mayor have done so little about the pollution, which is killing the equivalent of an estimated 4,300 Londoners every year. Young, energetic campaigns like Climate Rush will ensure that clean air is a big priority during the Mayoral elections. The real test for Mayoral candidates is whether they can agree to take real action to reduce traffic, lower fares and create a very low emission zone which only allows the cleanest of vehicles to enter central London ”

Tamsin Omond – 26, founder of Climate Rush – said:

“London’s air quality is amongst the worst in Europe. There has never been a better moment to demand political action. We have the mayoral elections, the Olympics and the possibility of unlimited EU fines if the Mayor can’t take control of the situation. Boris scrapped the Western Extension Zone, 6-monthly taxi inspections and delayed the introduction of Stage 3 of the Low Emission Zone. It’s not good enough – and it’s making us sick. Climate Rush’s next protest will disrupt the Olympic lanes unless we have election pledges from every candidate and policies to get London breathing.”

Climate Rush invited all three Mayoral candidates (Boris Johnson, Ken Livingstone and Jenny Jones) to join the Roadblock and to include air quality in their top 5 issues. Jenny Jones – the Green Party candidate – accepted their invitation and considers air quality a top campaign issue.