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A defining moment for UK transport; looking forward to Zero!



As I write this, we're in a moment that looks set to be a defining one for UK transport. The Government has dotted the 'i's and crossed the 't's (and emboldening its commitments!) on the final draft of the decarbonisation plan, which shapes how we will travel in future.

Now the plan has been revealed, we know the direction of travel (pun intended!) to zero emissions. The plan and raft of consultations and papers alongside it, show much more of the detail; an answer to the 'how do we get there' question.

There's no doubt that the signals the UK (and other) Governments have been sending have already made an impact. Battery electric vehicle sales are now rising fast – BEVs were nearly 11 per cent of the new car market last month, with PHEVs at 6.5 per cent, electric vans at 4.2 per cent of the growing market and electric mopeds represent 37 per cent of that segment YTD. Encouragingly, traditional manufacturers are queuing up to announce how they will be phasing out ICE sales before very long. Vauxhall (and sister company Opel) were the latest to say they'll offer only fully electric cars and vans in the UK from 2028.

The big – and hugely welcome – investment announcements from Nissan of an 'Electric Vehicle Hub' including a new battery 'gigafactory' in the North East and Stellantis (Vauxhall's owner) in electric van production in Ellesmere Port add to the strong feeling that things are changing in the right direction, and fast.

Plug-in and zero emission models already dominate the sales in taxis and buses, but there's lots more to do, of course, and transport electrification can only provide a part of the answer. Zemo Partnership's Conference on 20 July will embrace the decarbonisation plan, focusing on these technologies and the other key parts of the puzzle. The Conference aims to demonstrate how we can 'make it real'; what can be done here and now to take the carbon out of our travel behaviours and what this will mean for us as individuals, drivers and users, fleet managers and customers, as well as for all our organisations.

We hope – and expect – that the Conference will provide the first big opportunity for stakeholder experts to get together and share thoughts and ideas on what our transport future looks like having had sight of how the Government proposes we're going to get there.

The afternoon parallel sessions will focus on transport electrification – of course that's an important element of the transition - but also on decarbonising our freight and deliveries; and on how so much of this agenda will need to be managed, and driven, by authorities operating at the local level. Vital too, we'll be looking at how sharing vehicles and recharging infrastructure can cut emissions, as well as showing how organisations can help to take the carbon out of people's commute to work.

The plan has targets and roles for all aspects of the transition: fuels, technology, infrastructure, industry, data, finance, energy and behaviour...but it's people working in partnership that will ultimately deliver success. It's sure to be a good discussion at a vital moment in our transport history. Do join us!

FURTHER INFORMATION

See www.zemo.org.uk/conference for more details.