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# Global Car-free Cities Conference arrives in UK

**The global car-free movement brings its annual conference to the UK for the first time next year. In June, academics, city planners and campaigners from all over the world will take part in the week-long Towards Carfree Cities IX conference in York, which proposes a radical rethink of cities.**

The Towards Carfree Cities conference is a global gathering which aims to develop practical alternatives to car-dependent lifestyles and car-dominated cities. It is an annual forum for cutting-edge, radical thinking in transport policy and car-free development.

The conference series is run by the World Carfree Network, based in the Czech capital, Prague. This will be the first time that the conference has come to the UK in its 13-year history. Past conferences have taken place in Lyon, Berlin, Istanbul, the Colombian capital Bogotá, and Portland, USA.

The conference is being hosted by Carfree UK from **28 June to 1 July 2010**. Up to 200 participants from around the world are expected, primarily from the UK and Europe.

Steve Melia, Coordinator of Carfree UK said: **"We're delighted that the conference is coming to Britain for the first time. Carfree neighbourhoods are moving up the agenda in the UK, with the launch of the new carfree association for London, and increasing interest from local and national Government. This will be a great opportunity to learn from places all over the world, where neighbourhoods free from the curse of traffic pollution, danger, noise and congestion are planned or already in existence."**

The 2010 conference will be looking at the carfree vision of cities – where amenities are within walking distances, and space is reallocated from transport back to shared community use. The question being posed is: how can we get there from here?

One of the York organisers behind the bid, Randall Ghent, said **"The plan to build new eco-towns is almost a distraction. Most people in the UK live in cities built long before the car became supreme. We need a plan to fix our cities, and put them back on the human scale."**

Steve Melia said: **"We hope the Conference will attract planners, developers, academics, local activists and ordinary people from all over the country who want a better quality of life for their communities."**

[ENDS]

### *Notes to editors:*

- The goal of the Towards Carfree Cities conference series is to bring together people from around the world who are promoting practical alternatives to car dependence - walking, cycling and public transport, and ultimately the transformation of cities, towns and villages into human-scaled environments rich in public space and community life. The focus is on strategy, collaboration and exchange, assisting the practical work of conference participants - whether it be organising carfree days, promoting urban cycling, or building the carfree cities of the future.
- The conference website is at <http://www.worldcarfree.net/conference/>