

From: Peter Silverman
Sent: 27 February 2014 15:04
To: 'louise.ellman.mpXXparliament.uk'
Cc: Andrew Gwynne MP ; 'jeremyrXXparliament.uk'
Subject: Better Roads- Graham Dalton's evidence - Motorway litter

For the attention of:
Mrs Louise Ellman MP
Chair if the Commons Select Transport Committee

Dear Mrs Ellman,

I have been studying the video of the Better Roads hearing of 24th February. Thank you for raising the issue motorway litter with Graham Dalton, the Chief Executive of the Highways Agency.

I would like to make some comments on what he had to say.

The litter issue

He said he was aware of an issue and went on to say that the Highways Agency was being pursued fairly regularly by some /one or two people. I suspect that is a reference to myself and possibly Andrew Gwynne MP. We do however follow in the footsteps of Mike Penning MP who, as you will be aware, sponsored a parliamentary debate in March 2010 on Motorway Litter. In it he said the motorways were blighted by litter and that the legislation was not working.

Unfortunately he was not able to do anything about it when placed in charge of the Agency just two months later. Litter was not mentioned in any of the subsequent Highways Agency Business Plans. Instead he was obliged to preside over the 2010 spending review which involved reducing the payments made to the motorway service providers for routine maintenance work which includes litter picking.

As a result of these cut backs the problem he so forcefully described is still very much with us.

The money issue

Mr Dalton said he did not want to just throw lots of extra money at having a slightly tidier network. He had explained earlier that a Lump Sum was paid every year to the contractors to carry out routine maintenance including litter picking. What Andrew Gwynne and I are calling for is not extra money but for the Agency to ensure that their contractors carry out the work for which they are already being paid.

The safety issue

Mr Dalton said referring to litter picking "It is expensive to do and can be dangerous for road workers to pick it up. So it's about finding a balance"

Litter picking on the motorways should be, and I believe is, carried out safely using appropriate protection for the work force. There should therefore be no balance to be struck between exposing workers to danger and litter collection.

Number of bags collected

He said “We pick up 200,000 bags a year and that’s a lot of litter”. The important question is not how much litter is picked up but how long it is left in situ before it is eventually picked up.

There are laws against dropping litter and letting it fall from a commercial vehicle. There is also a law saying that duty bodies must ensure that the land in their charge is, so far as is practicable, kept clear of litter. Both sets of laws need to be enforced.

Mrs Ellman, I hope these comments are of help.

Kind regards

Peter Silverman

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[Mike Penning’s March 2010 speech](#)

[Clean Highways Submission to the Transport Committee](#)

[Video including Graham Dalton’s evidence to the Committee](#)