



THE SHOWMEN'S GUILD OF GREAT BRITAIN
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Carbon Footprint status – a work in progress:

The Showmen and Showwomen with the Showmen's Guild have made great strides on reducing their Carbon Footprint overall including

- operating within communities' neighbourhoods;
- promoting sustainable transport-use for families visiting their shows and
- supporting environmentally responsible initiatives including recycling and removal of single-use plastics.

Following the fuel use surveys since 2010:

- we upgraded our generators;
- we are getting cleaner operating machinery with vastly reduced emissions;
- we are 'pooling' generators so as to use planned power more efficiently;
- introduced low-energy LED lighting technology almost universally
- implemented more efficient inverters, replacing regular motors so reducing the power we need

We are concerned about the environment.

- While there is currently no alternative to diesel generator use, for the power needed to run a fair, especially in the open park locations not connected to the National Grid,
- The Showmen's Guild and the Show Community do however support the ambitions of the 'Treasury review into how Britain can fund its transition to a net zero carbon economy by 2050'.
- **when open for business**, 15-20% of power is for domestic use ;

Operating seasons:

- There are 2500 Showmen's Guild operating members with some having a 35-week season average;
- For others, seasons are longer than in the past and they could be operating from February until the first week in January the following year;
- Nearly twelve months of the year on the road; - using no Town-Power

Operating hours:

- Opening times of fairs (and circuses) vary across a week / month ; some operators are opening fewer hours , this year; others more;

- Circuses public operating hours' use (on average) 4 hours a day – with domestic use 24 hours a day , whilst touring.

Consultation with H.M. Treasury on fuel use in the summer of 2020:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/603e9923d3bf7f021bd87818/Summary_of_responses_to_the_red_diesel_consultation.pdf

The “alternative harm” was identified of fairground and Circus customers, who currently attend our shows & fairs in all parts of the country, however small; would otherwise have to all drive to larger centralised facilities, such as Amusement / Theme Parks & coastal centres; thus causing greater than would be caused by the entertainment brought to them.

The Treasury also acknowledged the cultural merit seen in our entertainment being brought to the local conurbations.

The Energy Innovation Programme and future power sources:

- We are working with the generator manufacturers on the latest generation of reduced emission equipment and are working towards the transition that will be a huge investment for the industry, at a time of increased costs overall.
- We are actively discussing alternative power sources such as solar, wind (Renewables) and battery power; with international Green Energy experts and with colleagues from the wider event industry through the Event Industry Forum (EIF) and TK Events.
- Currently renewables only work with power production at scale (e.g. wind farms / solar farms) where the power is remotely generated for ‘grid-use’.
- The operation of funfairs and circuses depends on using outdoor parks and open spaces which by definition do not have mains / grid-power supplied to them at all, or
- not to the scale required for the fair / circus productions that are limited to 28 days use of the land in any calendar year.
- To install such a required power supply is a major economic and logistical challenge facing the whole Event Industry and local communities collectively to undertake nor to maintain for the landowners; the power-supply authorities or the fair / circus operator(s) as end-users.
- **We are looking to take this forward with the Local Government Association (LGA); COSLA , in Scotland, London Councils and similar bodies across the UK overall**

The Treasury published (in 2021) their Summary of responses to the Consultation (in July 2020) on ‘Reforms to the tax treatment of red diesel and other rebated fuels’:

https://assets.publishing.service.gov.uk/media/603e9923d3bf7f021bd87818/Summary_of_responses_to_the_red_diesel_consultation.pdf

The Showmen’s Guild was one of 50 organisations that the government acknowledged engaging with in more depth, of the 244 companies and trade bodies (The Showmen’s Guild being within ‘Public Entertainment’).

Therefore we are, as a result of the benefit of using red diesel, more able to actively seek to work with Defra (who were party to the Red Diesel Consultation and restrictions) in lowering our carbon footprint as a quid pro quo for being able to continue to use rebated fuel, as promised.

We are trialling Biofuels and other renewable energy products.

“2.12 The government received a number of responses from operators of travelling fairgrounds and circuses, along with their representatives, who suggested that red diesel represents a relatively large proportion of their costs and that they had very limited capacity to absorb these costs. They suggested this would have a material impact on ticket prices paid by the people visiting these attractions.”

The Showmen’s Guild are looking to invest in greener energy alternatives, which we would otherwise be unable to undertake.

“Impacts on the price of goods and services households and/or voluntary organisations use or pay for over the long-term

2.28 The travelling fairground and circus sector made persuasive arguments about the potential impact on ticket prices if their fuel costs rose.

As a result, the government accepts that losing the entitlement to use red diesel could have a material impact on the costs of the entertainment that they provide to families all around the country.

We worked closely with Benjamin Kobryner (who was then Senior Policy Advisor – Transport Taxes as part of the Energy and Transport Tax Team and who is now Head of Environment and Climate Adaptation Strategy at the Treasury) *that the much highlighted*

“alternative harm” of fairground and Circus customers, who currently attend our shows & fairs in all parts of the country, however small; would otherwise have to all drive to larger centralised facilities, such as Amusement / Theme Parks & coastal centres; thus causing greater pollution than would be caused by the entertainment brought to them.

There was also cultural merit seen in our entertainment being brought to the local conurbations.

The Treasury also acknowledged that the tax changes could potentially impact the cultural heritage of travelling showmen.”

“Government response

5.4 The government has decided to maintain the entitlement to use red diesel for non-commercial heating, non-commercial power generation, and for travelling fairground and circus industries when used in their machinery and their caravans.

As a result, these tax changes will not adversely impact travelling showmen.”

The Local Government association (LGA) with whom we have forged a working partnership are of a similar view on both counts and would miss both the income and cultural nourishment that we bring to localities.

Details to choose parts of, from our original submission to the Treasury with industry-wide approved details and statistics (from Sept 2020):

Perverse outcomes:

Fair customers alternatively travelling long distances to corporately-run entertainment.

If we cannot operate our fairs, the customers will then need to drive / take a diesel train (in some areas) to fixed entertainments such as theme parks.

These are located, by their nature of land-use requirements, in out-of-town locations.

This means that driving to them is a necessity and even train passengers need to use diesel shuttle-buses to reach them (Thorpe Park is an example of this with Staines being the nearest station).

The business model of theme parks requires drawing in an audience from 50-100 miles in some cases.

The greater reliance that there would be on driving to these operations, beyond current use, the greater the emissions that there would be from car-use and the resultant traffic congestion across a wide area.

This is exactly what has happened in summer 2020, due to the Covid-19 restrictions, with local authorities not allowing many fairs and circuses to operate (notwithstanding that there was agreed Guidance between the industry, DCMS and HSE to do so with Social Distancing) , resulting in swarming of fixed locations in various parts of the UK by disenfranchised local communities in search of the entertainment that they had been denied in their own localities.

Additionally, theme parks are increasingly operated by multi-national companies and whilst economically successful, draw the business away from regionally and locally based fairground operators, who then cannot fulfil the operation of their historic Charter and other fairs, as part of their business-mix of operating fairs in parks for local communities.

Local communities currently benefit from the locality of their fairs (100-200 a week across the year) without their need to travel;

In several communities, apart from those who would otherwise travel to distant entertainments if the local fair were not available to them (because it had gone out of business as uneconomically viable), there are many that could not afford either the time or the expense (including admission prices) in travelling long distances for entertainment,

so, they then would miss out on the active recreation that fairs bring to the whole community altogether.