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10 Minutes For The Planet

London: A Radically Green Character©

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Words are explained alongside the text
Stressed syllables are underlined and in bold*

Hi there and welcome back to our weekly environmental series here on EnglishWaves, Ten Minutes for the Planet. Today we conclude our theme on the greenest cities in the world by taking a look at number 5 on the list, the dynamic British capital London. When thinking about London, you might be more likely to picture its **congested** roads or its history as one of the earliest sites of the Industrial Revolution. Yet despite London being one of the most important financial centers in the world, **its eyes are set on** radically greening its character.

London **boasts** an impressive collection of green spaces, literally making the city one of the greenest of them all. According to the most recent estimates the capital of Britain has over 35,000 acres of open spaces and parks, **woodlands** and public gardens. This is an astonishing number as it ultimately means over 40% of the territory of the metropolis is covered by publicly accessible open green spaces. Compare this to Berlin's 14.4%, a city well-known by many for its visible **greenery**!

On top of the city's green **endowment**, a coordinated effort to make London one of the greenest cities in the world, started as a response to the announcement that the city would **host** 2012 Olympic Games. To do this, London's mayor **committed** the city **to** reducing CO2 emissions by 60% by 2025 through **slashing** carbon **output** by reducing demand and wastage across the whole **spectrum**: individuals, **households**, businesses and local governments. The key measure was **addressing the problems** relating to domestic and commercial buildings, which **accounted for** a **staggering** 70% of CO2 emissions in the city. London's 7.5

congested (adj.) blocked with traffic

to set one's eyes on sth. (exp.) to have as an objective, to aim for

to boast (vb.) to be proud to have

woodlands (n.) large areas of trees

greenery (n.) vegetation

endowment (n.) natural gift

to host (vb.) to be the organizer of an event

to commit to do sth. (vb.) to decide to use resources to do sth.

to slash (vb.) to cut, reduce drastically

output (n.) production

spectrum (n.) range, variety of things

household (n.) group of people in a home

to address a problem (exp.) to try to solve a problem

to account for (vb.) to make up, to represent

staggering (adj.) very surprising (often of statistics)

million people were not only **urged** to turn off televisions and lights and **switch to** low energy **light bulbs**, but households were offered a significant **subsidy** to insulate their homes, which continues to account for 40% of annual carbon emissions.

Despite **targeting** reducing carbon emissions from buildings, the city has adopted a strategy primarily aimed at modernizing transport, in part **to better** London's air **qua**lity. A **drive** to replace 8,300 old diesel buses was **put in place** leading to the birth of a new low-carbon fleet for public transport. There were also 32,000 taxis **running on** diesel fuel which are pro**gres**sively being replaced by e**lec**tric **ve**hicles. However, most **fa**mously the city has taken a Paris style *Vélib* system, **dubbed** 'Boris bikes' after the city's ec**cen**tric mayor, and took the concept one step further with the con**struc**tion of cycle superhighways. Overall London has also been very suc**cess**ful in getting people out of their cars and onto public transport, with Transport for London recording a seven percent increase in **pa**ssengers year on year. This trend **bodes well** for the city in its effort to move towards number 1 on the list.

That concludes our look at the world's Top 5 Greenest Cities. Join us again next time when we'll start a **brand new** theme. Stay tuned to Ten Minutes for the Planet on EnglishWaves.

to urge (vb.) to encourage strongly

to switch to (vb.) to change to

light bulb (compound n.) the glass part of a light

subsidy (n.) money from the government to help pay for sth.

to target (vb.) to aim at as an objective

to better (vb.) to improve

drive (n.) a special concerted effort

to put in place (exp.) to implement

to run on (phrasal vb.) to use, consume

dubbed (adj.) given the name of

to bode well (n.) to be a good sign

brand new (exp.) completely new

Note the stress in the following adverbs. Silent letters are indicated in brackets:

radic(al)ly, **li**t(e)rally, **ul**timat(e)ly, **pu**blicly, pri**ma**rily, pro**gres**sively, **fa**mously

The following 3 syllable words all have their stress on the first syllable:

character, **es**timates, **ca**pital, **te**rrit(o)ry, **vi**sible, **bus**(i)nesses, **gov**ernments, **qua**lity, **ve**hicles, **pa**ssengers

The following 3 syllable words all have their stress on the middle syllable:

dy**na**mic, im**por**tant, fi**nan**cial, im**pres**sive, col**lec**tion, an**nounce**ment, do**mes**tic, e**lec**tric, ec**cen**tric, con**struc**tion, suc**cess**ful,