

### **Trouble Brewing for Londoners**

Delivery companies are experiencing increasing problems delivering into London, particularly central parts. Congestion has always been a problem but the new congestion charging scheme is making deliveries more expensive. In addition it is now almost impossible to deliver into Central London without incurring parking fines with councils being accused of deliberately creating revenue generating opportunities by not providing unloading areas and through the targeting of delivery trucks for fines.

For some companies this has become a seven figure annual bill which is proving very hard to pass onto Customers and some are now saying that they no longer want to provide this service.

Councils do have a problem though. Congestion and pollution in many cities are continuing to get worse and something needs to be done. Although modern, vibrant economies rely on the ability to easily deliver goods to where they are needed in a timely fashion, competition has created a fragmented market with too few vehicles operating at optimum efficiency in terms of tonne/kms delivered. Consolidation centres, where suppliers deliver to points on the outskirts of cities and then a smaller group of vehicles make consolidated, more efficient deliveries into the city centre, have been seen as a solution but nobody has really solved the problem of how these centres should be funded.

In the end it will probably require legislation. It must not, however, be the sort that simply relies on fines and taxes to keep vehicles away but provides positive solutions that keep goods flowing at the lowest overall cost to the economy and environment. In the meantime it seems that there is pain ahead for London and probably other cities too.

The Logistics Business is a supply Chain Consultancy with particular skills in transport and reducing its impact on the environment.