



Protest against cycle deaths

On 9th January cyclists once again descended on Kings Cross to express their anger and sadness at the terrible death toll on London's roads and to send a message to the Mayor and Transport for London (TfL) that we need streets designed for movement of people on foot and on bikes, not just those in vehicles.

The event was organised by Bikesalive who claim that 'polite meetings and symbolic action have had no effect' and the time has come to say enough is enough with

peaceful direct action to close the gyratory for an hour a week until TfL start to design our streets for people flow not vehicle flow.

Green mayoral candidate, Jenny Jones led the way on her bike followed by hundreds of cyclists and pedestrians filling the streets around the traffic dominated gyratory with noisy calls of 'where's Boris?'

There were many pedestrians amongst the cyclists and plenty of people who were clearly not 'transport geeks', just Londoners infuriated by the way our streets are managed and prepared to come

along to show they care. One woman passing through Kings Cross on her bike who hadn't known about the demo in advance, joined in saying she was 'so glad the demo was happening - I nearly get killed here every day'.

The policing was exemplary. Officers were sensitive to the strength of feeling about road death and injury. They coped admirably with the lack of leaders, enabled the demo to take place and kept people safe.

As Jenny Jones said in her blog 'road deaths and injuries are still too often seen as unavoidable in a modern society', clearly this has to change. It is absolutely not acceptable that so many families should pay such a high price for travelling on London's roads. I'll be there next week and hope others will too.

Caroline Russell

'Let them use the Javelin'

The VIP lanes for the Olympics was one of the issues which Caroline Pidgeon addressed at a well attended public meeting organised by CBT London in October. It's OK to make special provision for athletes who need to make sure they get to the stadium, she said, but the officials of the International Olympics Committee should go on the Javelin shuttle from St Pancras like everyone else.

Caroline Pidgeon (below), chair of the Transport Committee of the Greater London Authority, showed a firm grasp of transport issues facing London. She was thankful that the comprehensive spending review preserved transport spending and was pleased to note upgrades and extensions of the railway system and improvements in the cycling network. But she was critical of a number of issues, mentioning the slow rate of improvements in accessibility to the underground and in improving facilities for pedestrians.

A number of issues still need to be tackled, she thought. Amongst them was the issue of air pollution. The Lib Dem group on the GLA are presenting a plan to convert local delivery vehicles and taxis to run on electricity. She joined in criticism of the amount of parking provision in new developments such as Brent Cross which would generate an unsupportable increase in traffic.



Our Newsletter is sent out to our London members and other contacts.

The group exists to campaign for sustainable transport solutions in London and to support the work of the Campaign nationally. If you have not already done so we would be pleased if you would also join our group and take part in our London based activities.

To contact the group write to Chris Barker, Campaign for Better Transport, 46 Redston Road, London N8 7HJ. E-mail: c.barker@lineone.net: phone 020 8347 7684. Regular meetings of the group are held in central London.

The Newsletter is edited by Chris Barker. Contributors are welcomed. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Campaign for Better Transport.

design: Eve Barker

Deadline for the next issue will be 7th May to give you time to scribble some words about the result of the London mayoral election on 3rd May. Please take advantage!

High Speed 2

Controversy surrounding plans to build HS2 will go on rumbling for many years to come. Whilst the focus of attention is on the Chilterns, the upheaval in London will be massive.

Three issues come to the fore. First is the route into London and the destruction of property that this will entail. Second is the location of the London stations and third is the question of the link with HS1.

The plan is to build the main terminal at Euston. The line will then be in tunnel under Primrose Hill (at a deeper level than the existing tunnels), the West Coast main line and Kensal Green Cemetery, to emerge before the new station at Old Oak Common. The original intention was that it would then remain in the open following the GW/GC line but there will now be a further tunnel under Northolt and Ruislip before sweeping away on a new viaduct over the Colne valley.

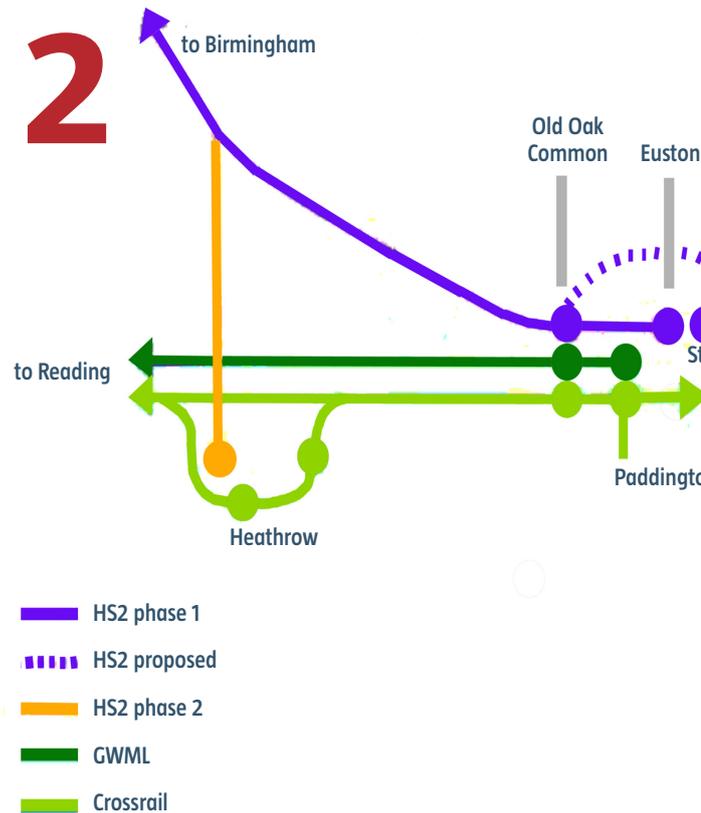
The present 14 platform station at Euston will be expanded to 24 platforms. This is reckoned to be necessary for the 18 trains per hour which it is proposed to run. The new accommodation will be on land to the west of the present station, will engulf Cardington Street and Melton Street and involve the demolition of 216 homes, 20 businesses and several open spaces. The demolition of more houses alongside the GW/GC line might now be averted by the new tunnel.

It has been suggested that the

land take might be less if other trains which presently use Euston could be diverted. One possibility is for outer suburban trains for Tring and beyond to be diverted onto Crossrail, of which more below. Although many long distance trains on the West Coast main line will be diverted onto HS2, the gaps will be taken up by an expansion of shorter distance services.

The second issue concerns the location of stations. The proposal for Old Oak Common was originally conceived as a connection point for Heathrow with an easy change onto the Heathrow Express. However there are other advantages in having two London stations. One of the big problems envisaged for an expanded Euston is that existing transport links will be insufficient to deal with the number of arriving and departing passengers, hence a proposal backed by Mayor Boris Johnson to divert Crossrail 2, the Hackney to Chelsea line, to serve the station. The connection at Old Oak Common with Crossrail could be used in the London direction as well as to Heathrow. Many passengers might find access to the West End and City, and indeed to other parts of London, more convenient from here than from Euston.

There are more grandiose plans for Old Oak Common. A DfT report of 2010 suggested that there could be a connection here not only with Crossrail but also with new Overground stations on the Richmond and the Clapham Junction lines. It has even been suggested that a connection would be made with



the West Coast main line and the Bakerloo Line at Willesden Junction although that is a fair distance from Old Oak Common and would require some intermediate form of transport. There is then the suggestion, mentioned above, of diverting outer suburban trains from the West Coast main line onto Crossrail serving Old Oak Common.

On the question of connecting HS2 with HS1 the decision now seems to have been made to build a new tunnel independent of existing lines. Although a DfT consultation report stated that the strategic case for a direct link is strong, there is

some doubt whether a sufficient number of passengers between the Midlands and Paris or Brussels would be generated. What is more there would be huge security and immigration problems at all the stations served.

Finally, it should be added that Greengauge 21, one of the groups lobbying for HS2, is now suggesting that one high speed line to the north is insufficient and that there should be a second line up the east coast serving Stansted Airport and Cambridge. Will this need for expansion never end?

Chris Barker

Olympic Games transport: details trickle out

The Olympic Games divides London much as the Mayoral election. There are those who wanted the Games and are annoyed that they don't have tickets, and those who are wary of the disruption to their lives particularly when these involve transport across London.

In November, the transport commissioner briefed local authority councillors with a 101 slide presentation famed mostly for his suggestion that we stay in London for a drink after work to avoid the crush, particularly at London Bridge or Bank. As usual, it was prepared very much from the perspective of a transport professional, for whom moving people during the peaks, and the morning peak in particular, represents the greatest challenge and thus forms the basis of all transport planning.

London is a twenty-four hour city so not inconsiderable numbers seek to travel to work in the evening peak, between the peaks or off-peak. Not everyone has a job in which the precise arrival time is uncritical, and many leisure activities require arrival by a certain time. The constant emphasis on minimising average journey time is thus misplaced; for many of us, minimising the maximum journey time is more important.

This is in part why the lack of firm information is giving rise to scare stories about the likely impact of the Games. In early December, posters appeared on the South-Eastern warning of serious disruption during the Games, but as yet offering no detail. On December 11th, the new National Rail timetable appeared. In a departure from previous practice, it is intended to run for twelve months. London Overground have produced leaflets which run to December 2012, but London Midland and Virgin tables are only applicable to

August 9th, while the East Coast Main line table expires in June. London Midland does list extra trains which will run at night to Northampton; London Overground promise details from February. I have subsequently been informed that there will be eight trains an hour until 1 am from Stratford.

The greater impact is likely to be to bus services, because road closures and private lanes for foreign dictators (and English ones for that matter) will curtail or divert routes. Double deckers will replace single deckers on some routes, which will cause recognition problems.

Transport for London will assure us that journey planning is easily done via their web-site. Unfortunately, it has a habit of selecting the most expensive route, often sending the would be passenger via zone 1 when avoiding it would be simpler as well as cheaper.

Andrew Bosi

The debate widens



Having delayed the announcement originally planned before Christmas, the government has at last given the go-ahead for High Speed 2 with 50 per cent more tunnels proposed for Northolt and the Chilterns.

The impact on mostly Tory held constituencies in the countryside has caused some alarm bells to ring. The danger is that the impact on urban areas may be given less regard.

The route into Euston may not destroy picturesque countryside, but it would destroy thousands of homes at a time when demand already far outstrips supply. It is simply unacceptable to make glib statements about building the houses elsewhere when there is no elsewhere. If there were, some urgently needed house building should be taking place already. A derisory 56 new start affordable dwellings has been amassed in the first six months of 2011/12, across the whole country. The figure for the previous twelve months ran into thousands.

Meanwhile, an unlikely alliance of the Labour Party front bench spokesperson and the Bow group are calling for the High Speed line to be built to Heathrow. Others feel such an option would be disastrous.

HS2 has at least the merit of promoting some discussion about improvements to conventional railways or the building of new high speed lines. It is though far from advanced. There is little to be heard

about how conventional railways might develop. Improved signalling technology would enable capacity increases by reducing the time between trains. Future train design should facilitate longer trains and might also obviate the need for continuous overhead wires, reducing the cost of electrification and of its maintenance, if the areas vulnerable to high winds no longer need to be wired.

There is though a complete vacuum in air policy, without which the issue of whether to take HS2 to Heathrow cannot sensibly be taken forward. We are supposedly committed to reducing the national carbon footprint. The Prime Minister claimed this would be the greenest government ever, and was not having a dig at the inexperience of the junior partner in the Coalition. Air travel is the greatest offender against air quality, yet we still have subsidised fuel available to airlines rather than train operating companies. We still have an influential business lobby which seems to think that having the busiest airport in Europe is as important to the economy as maintaining the status of the London Stock Exchange ahead of its European counterparts.

We should be setting a date for the last domestic air travel across land. We should be challenging the idea that having the biggest airport in Europe is a prerequisite for economic success. Instead we should plan for growth in numbers so that anyone who has to fly can do so from the airport nearest to their home or place of work.

Andrew Bosi

It's good to talk - introducing Movement for Liveable London



Cities are founded on the need for people to exchange ideas alongside goods and money; if those ideas can be exchanged over a pint of beer or a glass of wine, then so much the better. Blogs and Twitter are fantastic resources, but nothing beats getting together for a good chat (or even an argument).

Movement for Liveable London was founded almost a year ago with the aim of broadening the debate about how changing the way we travel and design our public realm can help create a more liveable city. It seemed crazy that a city like London had no forum that those with a personal rather than a professional interest in these issues could easily attend; that discussions almost always took place during the day, in meeting rooms or conference venues, rather than in the evening, down the pub.

Our Street Talks are one of the ways we hope to stimulate that debate. Street Talks are informal evening events aimed at anyone with an interest in the way people move around London and use its streets and public spaces. Past speakers include CBT's Richard Bourn and Richard Hebditch; Andrew Cameron, Director of Urban Design at WSP Group; Dr Harry Rutter, Director of the National Obesity Observatory; and Amy Aeron-Thomas, Executive Director of RoadPeace (all the presentations are available on our website).

Some big changes are needed to the way that people travel around London if we are to create a transport system that allows the city to thrive and prosper in the future. London needs to start investing now to create a resilient transport network that can respond to the challenges of climate change and peak oil while improving quality of life and reducing inequalities.

It will take a bold and enlightened politician to develop, sell and deliver a vision for a genuinely sustainable transport network built

around pedestrians, bikes and affordable public transport that reduces reliance on and the dominance of the private car. It remains to be seen whether May's elections will give us a Mayor who is up to the challenge, but we're probably at least one election cycle away from finding the right candidate, at least amongst the main parties.

If that is the case then all those with an interest in addressing the social, economic and environmental impacts of our current movement habits need to spend the next four years building the political will necessary to address London's transport challenge. That will require campaigning groups to work together to develop a shared vision for a liveable city and engage as many people as possible in demanding real change.

At the risk of getting all Big Society on you, we hope that Movement for Liveable London can play a part in engaging and inspiring 'citizen champions' for a fairer, healthier, greener and more pleasant future for London; who will demand that campaigners, policy makers and politicians be more ambitious in their approach to sustainable movement and the design and management of London's public realm.

Bruce McVean
Co-founder of Movement for Liveable London and Integrated Design Manager at Beyond Green.

Upcoming Street Talks

7th February 2012

Tim Gill, *Rethinking Childhood: There's a salmon in my street – the outdoor child as an indicator species for the quality of urban environments.*

6th March 2012

Anna Minton, author of *Ground Control: Fear and happiness in the twenty-first century city*
Both will be held upstairs at The Yorkshire Grey, 2 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PN, starting at 7pm (bar open 6pm).

More details are available at movementforliveablelondon.com/street-talks



Living Streets has recently published its mayoral manifesto calls for the London 2012 elections. They set our vision for London to become a truly world class city for walking.

For our lead campaign a City of 20, Living Streets have partnered up with Sustrans and 27 other organisations to call for the future mayor to introduce 20mph speed limits on mayoral controlled streets where we live, work and shop.

The future mayor needs to make sure that London's streets play their part as social, economic and cultural spaces, whether as locations for shopping and leisure in the city's many town centres, or simply as places for informal social activity.

Yet communities and businesses throughout London are under threat as their local town centres and high streets have become little more than corridors for traffic. We believe reducing traffic speeds on these streets is the single biggest measure that will make them safe, vibrant and social places where communities and local businesses can thrive.

A city of 20 would create a safer London. In 2009, the British Medical Journal published a study into the effects of 20mph speed limits in London between 1986 and 2006. The results showed that the introduction of 20mph zones was associated with almost 42% fewer road casualties¹. Younger children proved to be the main beneficiaries in this reduction in casualties.

It would also make London a

better place to walk and cycle. A 20 mph speed limit in built-up areas allows for the safe mixing of motorised and non-motorised modes of transport, and makes it easier for pedestrians and cyclists to enjoy the same direct and safe routes for their journeys as motorists.

Reducing speed limits helps create more people friendly streets too. A study from the Commission for Integrated Transport in 2001 found that where cities have 20 mph speed limits covering between 65% and 85% of the street network, they are transformed "from being noisy, polluted places into vibrant, people-centred environments."²

We have momentum for a city of 20 is with us. Islington Council already has a 20mph default speed limit on all its residential streets. It is now set to become the first council in the UK to introduce 20 mph limits on all main roads controlled by the borough.

But in Islington, as in every London borough, the mayor controls a number of the most important streets where we live, work and shop. The refusal to introduce 20 mph on these streets despite the obvious benefits has resulted in unsafe, unattractive and unwelcoming streets that offer very little to the local communities and businesses that rely on them.

If you would like to support the campaign please write directly to the mayoral candidates via the Living Streets online e-action at <http://bit.ly/acityof20>

Tom Platt
Living Streets London Coordinator

1 C Grundy, R Steinbach, P Edwards, P Wilkinson & J Green (2009) *20mph zones and Road Safety in London* London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine, 2 Commission for Integrated Transport (2001) *Study of European best practice in the delivery of integrated transport.*



Croxley rail link nearer

The Secretary of State for Transport Justine Greening has confirmed funding for the Croxley Rail Link and the scheme to divert Metropolitan Line trains from their present Watford terminus into Watford Junction is now likely to go ahead. Work on the £120m rail project that will change the face of Watford and Croxley Green has been approved by the government. The line will start on a new viaduct over Watford Road, use the currently disused track between Croxley Green and Watford High Street and then the London Overground line to Watford Junction.

Cycling trouble

Recent deaths of cyclists in London are bringing into focus the dangerous conditions which cyclists have to face. Nowhere is this more true than Kings Cross where demonstrations were held on 20th December and 9th January (see separate item) to protest against three deaths in the last five years. TfL has responded with a promise to review the road network here. Suggestions include restoring two way traffic in York Way and Grays Inn Road.

The Bow roundabout has also been the subject of criticism after two cyclists were killed, in both cases by lorries turning left. In this case the London Cycling Campaign have called for the design to be altered so that cyclists are protected by lights on all four arms of the junction. The junction is part of Cycle Superhighway 2. The Mayor has ordered a review of cycle safety on all parts of the Cycle Superhighway network.

Removing traffic lights

TfL tells us that traffic lights have been removed with 20 sites in London and there are more to go. Pedestrian crossing times are also

being reduced. The stated reason is to speed traffic flow which is likely to result in more traffic. Although the needs of pedestrians are said to be safeguarded it is difficult to imagine that it will always be as easy to cross the road at busy road junctions without the help of traffic lights. A demonstration was held on 9th January at Kings Cross, organised by Transport For All, to protest against these moves. Lianna Etkind, their Campaigns and Outreach Co-ordinator, said 'For disabled and older people, especially blind and VI [visually impaired] people, this is an utter disaster'.

Boris bikes not reducing car use

TfL reports that only three percent of hire bike users have transferred from cars, vans or motor cycles. Although this is disappointing in terms of cutting road congestion the success of the scheme has certainly raised the profile of cycling. Those who might otherwise use the tube or buses are helping to ease congestion on these services as well as promoting a more healthy lifestyle.

Chelsea to Hackney and beyond

TfL have produced two options for the long awaited Crossrail 2 linking Chelsea and Hackney. One is for an automatic metro starting from Clapham Junction and extending from Hackney to Seven Sisters and the other is for a heavy rail tunnel from Wimbledon, collecting trains from South-West London branches. In this version, one branch would join the Lee Valley line and another, remaining in tunnel, would extend to Seven Sisters, Wood Green and Alexandra Palace. Both are planned to serve Euston for HS2. Grandiose ideas. One wonders how many of them will see the light of day.

Fair fares

Protesters were out in force on 3rd January, the date that rail fares went up by an average of six percent. Together for Transport, the transport trade union campaign to which CBT London are affiliated, demonstrated and gave out postcards at St Pancras station asking people to join the campaign. Others were campaigning at a number of London stations on behalf of Ken Livingstone with the promise that he will reduce fares if he is elected mayor in May.