

**Future Transport London** campaigns for sustainable solutions to London's transport problems favouring public transport, walking and cycling over private cars.

Membership £15 a year.  
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The newsletter is edited by Chris Barker. Contributions are welcomed. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and are not necessarily those of Future Transport London.

Please look at and comment on our new website at <https://www.futuretransportlondon.org/>. All issues of the newsletter can also be found there.

# FTL

Future Transport London

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## Barking Riverside

**Barking Riverside is the largest housing development in east London, with planning permission for up to 10,800 new homes.**

The area is currently served by three bus routes, running partly on dedicated right of way. In the Autumn the extension of the Gospel Oak to Barking Over-ground line is due to open.

Adding to the mix is a new river service. Uber Boats has started a river bus service from

Barking Riverside Pier. Boats will run from and to central London during peak hours Monday to Friday, and all-day during weekends, with a 20 to 30 minute frequency. The boats will also provide a connection across the river to Woolwich.

So often new developments

are completed without adequate public transport provision compelling residents to feel they need to invest in a car. Barking Riverside proves that this does not have to be the case. It is an exemplar which should be more widely followed.

# Are we ready for Road User Charging?

**Announcing his plan to extend the ULEZ, London's Mayor Sadiq Khan said: we need to further reduce emissions from vehicles in London. ... The climate emergency means we only have a small window of opportunity left.**

The awful consequences of failing to cut emissions enough are partially foreshadowed by the nearly 500 additional deaths in London due to nineteen days of heatwaves in 2020. Many places including nearly half of London hospitals, and one in five schools will be at risk of flooding if temperatures continue rising.

The Committee on Climate Change recommend a 37 per cent cut in UK car emissions by 2030. However expanding the ULEZ to the whole of London would reduce CO2 emissions in outer London only 6.7 per

cent. This is because the ULEZ criteria take no account of CO2. While extending the ULEZ to the whole of London is a step forward, when considering the climate emergency it is seriously inadequate. Already half the world's population is suffering severe water shortage at some point each year due to climate breakdown. It is vital that cities take strong action promptly. Sadiq Khan, as chair of the global group C40 Cities, could ensure that London sets a great example for other world cities to follow.

The Mayor needs to focus on the survey findings that about 42 per cent of miles travelled in England are for leisure, and that higher income families drive much further than drivers in poorer households. Therefore, emissions from cars could be substantially reduced with-

out causing deprivation. TfL found that only one trip in seven by a driver involves any thought about which mode of travel to use, with only four per cent giving this serious thought in regard to a specific journey. Research shows that even quite modest road user charges can stimulate a significant proportion of people to drive less.

## **Londoners ready to drive less**

Nearly two-thirds of Londoners think that 'motorised transport' makes a large or very large contribution to climate change. Only one in six say they would not consider using public transport instead of driving). Seven out of eight say they are motivated to help prevent climate change.

Encouraging people to drive less would be strengthened by convenient and affordable public transport. However, as the pandemic decimated TfL's income, we face substantial cuts in services plus fare rises. The best way the Mayor can cut car emissions is to raise money from those drivers who can afford to pay in order to reduce some of the public transport cuts.

To do this the mayor could very soon include vehicles which emit well above the average level of CO2 in the current ULEZ. This could be enforced using the existing cameras and therefore would need no upfront investment. 2018 statistics show that nearly one-sixth of UK cars emitted more than 171 grams of CO2 per kilometre. I took a random sample of nine such cars which are not liable to pay the ULEZ charge. Their average price when new is 1.8 times that of the average new price of the 10 best-selling cars in the UK,

and therefore they are probably nearly all owned by people with well above average income. If these cars were driven within the ULEZ about 100 times per year, each would pay £1,250 per year, totalling £201 million.

Expanding the ULEZ throughout Greater London would substantially improve air quality, with major health benefits. However, the ULEZ gives drivers no incentive to limit their mileage once they have incurred the set daily charge. By contrast, per mile road charging would be both fairer, and more effective in discouraging mileage. The charge per mile would increase according to the emissions level of the car, the availability of public transport in that locality, and the congestion level at that particular time. Technology like that in smart phones, and also built into many cars, is already available for privacy-friendly smart road charging, and used in various places such as Washington State. At just 8p per mile, smart charging for cars in London would raise about £1.14 billion per year, after exempting electric cars and cars driven by or for people with disabilities. With smart road charging Sadiq Khan could go down in history as a trailblazer for climate protection, clean air, and affordable public transport.

*If you wish to check any of the sources cited, visit <https://www.chartist.org.uk/london-takes-lead-on-clean-air/> and you can click on the links there.*

## **Tim Root**

*Tim Root is a member of Friends of the Earth London Network [friendsoftheearth-muswellhill@gmail.com](mailto:friendsoftheearth-muswellhill@gmail.com)*

## **HAVE YOUR SAY**

**Please take part in the Mayor's consultation starting this May:**

**<https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/>  
to say**

- **Yes to expand the Ultra Low Emission Zone throughout London**
- **London needs per mile road user charging very soon to protect our climate and improve air quality.**
- **More info on the mayor's consultation, once it goes live, will be at <https://www.croydonclimateaction.com/londonfoenetwork>**

# TRANSPORT FOR LONDON FINANCES

**When our last newsletter went to press, TfL and the Daft were working towards a deadline of February 4th by which time a long term agreement would supposedly be announced.**

Some days later, a new deadline of February 18th was declared, and a few days after that one had passed, the 'temporary' agreement was further extended to June, recognizing that from late March to May 5th there would be local election campaigns which impose a period of 'purdah' during which decisions which are of a political nature cannot be made.

The Department continues to demand conditions which override the powers given to the Mayor. This comes at a time when the government's levelling up agenda is giving the North and Midlands a Mayor with the same powers as the Mayor of London, but is silent on the cuts to bus services which many have experienced from the start of the new financial year, when Covid related

subsidies came to an end.

At a time when the cost of living is acknowledged as one of the major issues which ought to relegate 'Partygate' to the inside pages, the government has imposed a 3.8 per cent increase in National fares and a 4.8 per cent increase in London, based on formulae from the Retail Price Index (RPI) at its July 2021 level. As we approach July 2022, the RPI is already running at 9 per cent (the March figure) and most predictions are that it will continue to rise over the next four months. There was allegedly some scope left to the Mayor as to how the increase was applied, but if so he has done a complete U-turn on his previous policy of protecting the least well-off and maximizing use of public transport by freezing fares. The increase has been loaded onto bus fares and thus on the people least able to pay.

The Mayor has thus missed the opportunity to correct the distortion in the fare structure introduced by his predecessor. Mayor Johnson

complained that his predecessor had been over-focused on central London, but in a crass bid to outflank George Osborne, Johnson reduced zone 1 peak fares, while those in outer London using a daily travelcard (or daily price cap) had to pay for zone 1 even if they did not need it – the zone 2-6 card or cap having been abolished.

The purdah period means we are hearing little about progress, or its lack, towards a June agreement. It is supposed to address funding for capital programmes – only those already committed have been proceeding, so we have the Northern line extension, we will have the new Piccadilly trains, but not the signalling that would optimize their use, and not the replacement stock for the Bakerloo line trains, which are so old as to still have comfortable seats. However, we should at last know by then the date at which the central section of the Elizabeth line will open and start to generate income instead of consuming it. There is still a shortfall in the funding

needed to complete the project; there is still a shortfall in funding the repair of Hammersmith Bridge.

Jon Cruddas has continued to pursue the need for a station at Beam Park without which planning permission for hundreds of the houses everyone says must be built no longer exists. He reports a positive meeting and it appears that this item is on the agenda for the continuing discussions between TfL and the Daft.

Having the election out of the way should also clear the air. The pessimistic assessment is that if the Tories do better than expected they will take that as an endorsement for the policy of taking powers from the Mayor; if they do badly they will wash their hands of London as a lost cause. On the other hand, if Parliament finally accepts the need to uphold the Ministerial code, a fresh face at the head of government would clear the air in a more positive vein.

**Andrew Bosi**



## Rebuilt London bridge

**Before rebuilding, London Bridge National Rail station had waiting rooms, snack bars, information about departures from other platforms and toilets on some of its six 'through' platforms but, as rebuilt with nine 'through' platforms, none has any of these facilities at platform level. Why?**

The photograph shows the Thameslink platforms (4 and 5) during a Friday off peak period. As you can see, the distance between the tracks is substantial. However, much of the width of this typical 'through' platform (except at its ends) is taken up by the stairs, escalators, and lifts. So, the space available for passengers waiting to board a train in the middle section of the long platforms is very limited and risks dangerous overcrowding if, for example, there is serious disruption during peak hours.

The old through platforms had ramps at the 'London' end and an interchange footbridge served only by stairs about halfway along. More passengers are likely to wait nearer the middle of London

Bridge's long new platforms, built to serve 12-carriage, 240 metre trains (unlike the short old platforms through which longer trains went nonstop), because shorter trains don't reach the platform ends. Some Thameslink services, for example, are only 8 carriages long and stop alongside the middle of the platform, the very section where limited standing space is available. Anyone waiting at the far end of the platform would face a 40-metre walk to board an 8-carriage train.

That explains why the new London Bridge was designed with a massive concourse below all 15 new platforms with numerous waiting areas, retail units, toilets, and comprehensive train indicators. Arriving passengers have no reason to linger at platform level and are intended to descend to the concourse as soon as possible. Departing passengers have little reason to leave the concourse facilities until shortly before their train is due.

Given all the circumstances, a wider station or fewer platforms were never options.

**Neil Roth**

# Let's Walk London

**Arriving at London's mainline railway stations with their majestic, lofty roofs and amazing iron work is a joy. But leaving the train, most people are directed to the tube, bus or a taxi. If they decide to walk, apps often direct them down polluted main roads.**

This is where Footways comes in. We have plotted routes that link destinations with the capital's most attractive, quiet, green and appealing streets. With funding from TFL we published a paper map in 2020, which has been in high demand, and our basic online version has been viewed over one million times. The map is the first to present central London from a pedestrian perspective, showing how many journeys can be walked.

The next edition is being launched with a campaign, 'Let's Walk', which promotes continuing journeys from stations on foot, to see the city

unfold and arrive at destinations happier and healthier. This is 'combo travel', a term coined by Glenn Lyons and others in 2021, to describe the integration of rail and walking as a form of travel, which supports health, public transport, decarbonisation and economic prosperity.

We have three key aims in the campaign. The first is to inform people that beyond the immediate environs of the stations are wonderful streets. In London, the many lanes of traffic on the Euston Road and inadequate crossings are a formidable obstacle. But dare to cross the road and beautiful Bloomsbury lies beyond. At Waterloo, there's a chaos of steps, uneven pavements and a large roundabout that makes walking either inconvenient, or extremely onerous if you're in a wheelchair. But once on the bridge there are fabulous views and then the new piazza on the Strand and the pedestrianised streets of Covent Garden.

Our second and related aim is to change mindsets. Our research has shown that most 15-minute walks in London don't take much longer than a bus, taxi or tube trip, which most people choose. We want to shift habits. Public transport planning assumes people walk about 10 minutes from or to a

train station. But walking 15 or 20 minutes would get you from Euston to the British Museum, Paddington to the Serpentine Gallery or Liverpool Street to Tate Modern.

Thirdly, we are campaigning for infrastructure improvement which is vital for integrating rail and walking. There are excellent examples. In Strasbourg and Nimes, the stations are surrounded by low-traffic or car-free piazzas and streets which provide easy access and vistas to the city. In Sheffield, the pedestrianised, tree-lined Howard Street draws you from the station to the city centre on foot.

As well as republishing the second edition of the map, which Applied Information has redesigned, we have a new digital map on Mapbox. We're working with more sponsors, which include Network Rail, who will distribute 10,000 free maps from its 11 mainline stations from 24th May. The map will also be on sale at a limited number of bookshops

We hope this collaboration with Network Rail is the beginning of long-term partnership to show what's possible in combining walking and rail. Follow us at @footwayslondon for updates about the launch.

**David Harrison,**  
*co-founder of Footways*

## TFL UNDER SIEGE

**The government is demanding that Tfl resolve its own financial difficulties following the decimation of its finances due to the Covid crisis, but various funding solutions proposed by the Mayor have been vetoed.**

Proposals include a tax on home deliveries, a bid for the £500 million per year paid by Londoners in vehicle excise duty and a boundary charge for vehicles entering the capital.

It seems the government is intent on moulding TfL into its own image demanding changes such as fare increases, a 'dynamic' fares structure which would charge more in busy periods, research into driverless tubes and changes to TfL's pension fund.

Without further funding TfL will be forced into a regime of managed decline resulting in lower service levels and no replacement of outdated equipment. The number of bus services experiencing frequency cuts continues at a steady rate. London TravelWatch calculated that between summer 2021 and the middle of February 2022 there will have been frequency cuts on 52 day bus routes and 4 night bus routes. Routes 1 and 271 are for the chop.

London is the only large city whose transport system is not supported by central government grants.



*'Dare to cross Euston Road and beautiful streets for walking lie beyond'.*

# Paying to drive

**After intense lobbying by many environmental groups, including Future Transport London, Mayor Sadiq Khan has instructed TfL to explore the possibility of introducing a road pricing scheme that would charge by distance travelled, time and location, to be introduced in the Mayor's manifesto for 2024.**

There could be exemptions and discounts for those on low incomes and with disabilities and also some support for charities and small businesses. Newly appointed Deputy Commissioner for Transport, Seb Dance, said the 'car revolution' is 'not the future of what the city can be. It's almost socially unacceptable to say we don't recycle. The same thing is needed to the way we travel'.

Element Energy, in a report commissioned by Khan, said that there would need to be a 27 per cent cut in car journeys in London to achieve net zero by 2030.

There are doubts, however, whether the necessary technology could be ready in time for 2024 and other options are being considered and it is now decided to extend the £12.50 ULEZ charge to the whole of Greater London in 2023.

In all cases electric vehicles would be exempt from charges which means the measure, whilst dealing with air quality, would not deal with other issues arising from traffic such as road safety and congestion. Exempting electric vehicles from charges is going to have another effect in years to come as government finds its tax take from vehicles is severely diminished. The longer electric vehicle owners are allowed to drive for nothing the more difficult it will be to begin charging them. Road user charging would overcome this hurdle if it applied to all vehicles.

The general belief is that the idea that you should pay by the mile for driving in London is unpopular and that the Mayor would suffer a catastrophic drop in his popularity if he were to introduce it.

A survey for Centre for London in May suggested that this is not necessarily the case. Respondents were asked their views on four different solutions to help solve TfL's funding crisis. The responses were: increasing charges to drive in parts of London (27 per cent), cutting services (15 per cent), increasing fares (12 per cent), a nationwide tax increase (11 per cent), an increase in taxes in London (9 per cent).

When asked specifically whether they



*24 hour bus lane - in, 271 bus - soon to be out*

would support the introduction of pay-per-mile road user charging as an alternative to the existing road charges in the city (ULEZ, and the Congestion Charge), 42 per cent said they would while 26 per cent said they would not.

Labour and Conservative voters were equally as likely to support the introduction of road user charging (44 per cent were in favour in both groups). Of particular significance is that car owners were also as likely to support the introduction of road user charging as people who don't own a car (43 per cent and 41 per cent respectively), but car owners were also more likely to oppose (30 per cent, compared to 20 per cent among people who don't own a car). Having monitored the effects of the trial on journey times for bus passengers, and on journey times for other traffic, TfL have

concluded that the trial to make the majority of bus lanes on TfL red routes 24 hours and seven days a week is a success and will be made permanent. During the trial several parking bays were suspended but some have been reinstated. TfL research found that bus journey times were reduced but also that there seemed to be no increase in journey times for other traffic.

A majority of people consulted during the trial supported the change. Apart from the parking issue there seems little reason to oppose the change. If traffic is heavy the bus lane is needed for buses, but if it is not heavy, there is no reason why general traffic should need to use it. Making bus lanes 24 hours makes it clear that drivers should not use them and reduces the uncertainty which arises if they are only active during certain hours.

**Bus Alliance local election asks**

There are a number of practical changes that local authorities can make which would help the bus become more reliable and reduce bus journey times.

London TravelWatch’s Bus Alliance, the launch of which was reported in the last FTL newsletter, issued their list of demands in January. They are:

- Make existing bus lanes 24/7 except at clearly defined loading times
- Enforce parking restrictions on bus routes
- Review parking spaces which slow the bus down
- Provide more priority for the bus at junctions
- Increase the number of bus lanes and other measures which improve bus journey times.

**Feeling safe on public transport**

A disturbing report by London TravelWatch highlights the dangers that passengers, particularly women, perceive in travelling on public transport. 48 per cent of women said that they had stopped travelling at certain times of day, particularly night time, due to personal safety concerns. Nearly one in four women experienced unwanted sexual behaviour in the last 3 years. Hate crime remains a pressing issue for London transport users particularly affecting ethnic

minority and disabled people. A major demand arising from these concerns is that the night tube should be fully restored and that night bus services should be protected.

The provision of a regular public transport service is a necessary but not sufficient factor in assuring passengers’ safety. A demand is to create a safer travelling environment through CCTV and staff presence. Passengers want to be assured that they can be supported if they experience harassment or assault. Many cite the contrast with Uber in which passengers know in advance what taxi they will be using and can let friends or family track their journey. British Transport Police are developing an app on which they can report incidents and TfL are exploring ways in which this can be incorporated into their own TfL Go app.

One of the strongest themes in the research was the need for better tools, messaging and guidance to help people be active bystanders. Active bystanders are those who witness or are nearby when a crime or incident happens, and choose to help the victim in the moment, or after. They can also help by reporting

- or providing information to help identify perpetrators of crimes. More can be
- done to help transport users, and transport staff, be better equipped to help others.

**Watford rail links**

It is now recognised that the proposed Metropolitan line diversion from Croxley to Watford Junction is dead and alternative ways of improving services in the area are being considered under the title of ‘The Watford to Croxley link’.

A report by consultants Steer in 2021 considered a number of alternatives. Two involved alternative extensions to the Metropolitan line; one by tunnel from its existing station to Watford Junction and the other by a diversion of the Metropolitan line from Moor Park to join the existing London Overground route at Watford High Street. Also suggested was a rebuilding of the triangle south of Watford High Street to enable Overground trains to reach Croxley. All were considered too expensive.

The most straightforward suggestion was a shuttle recreating the former route to Croxley using zero emission powered trains with new stations at Watford Hospital and Ascot Road. This is not regarded as a viable plan because of its lack of connectivity and high cost.

Another idea also ruled out because of cost is linking the Croxley line with the St Albans line either by tunnel from the Metropolitan line or by tram trains running on street through the centre of the town.

What is left and recommended for further study by Steer is bus rapid transit utilising the track bed of the former railway and then operating as a conventional bus through the town centre. Hertfordshire County Council is considering options.

**More on 20mph**

TfL are taking forward the proposals for 20mph limits across 13km of their red route roads in Westminster including Marylebone Road, Vauxhall Bridge Road and Edgware Road between the A40 and St. John’s Wood Road. All its roads within the Congestion Charge zone are now 20mph and a blanket

15mph limit has been mooted for all roads within the City of London.

In addition to this a number of TfL roads outside central London are also to have their speed limits reduced to 20 mph including the A10-A503 corridor in Haringey, A13 Commercial Road in Tower Hamlets, A23 London Road in Croydon and A107 corridor in Hackney. A new 30mph speed limit will also be introduced on the A10 Great Cambridge Road in Enfield, reduced from 40mph.

**Bridges and Tunnels**

The shortfall in TfL funding is taking its toll on roads and bridges. Hammersmith Bridge remains closed to traffic. 54 TfL road tunnels and bridges currently have interim safety measures in places. There are weight limits on Rotherhithe Tunnel, speed restrictions on the A40 Westway, and major work is needed on Vauxhall Bridge. TfL reckons it needs £150 to £200 million per year to keep on top of routine renewals but in recent years has only been able to spend around £93 million.

TfL says: ‘Under this scenario, asset condition will deteriorate more rapidly than the “do minimum”, resulting in increased likelihood of restrictions and asset closures in order to keep the network safe. This will result in increased operational expenditure [...] to install and maintain increasing numbers of temporary restrictions as well as increased network impacts and delays to road users including increased journey times for buses. The backlog of renewals will increase in both scale and time to address it, and renewals schemes are likely to need more extensive, and therefore costly, interventions as works are no longer optimised’. As a matter of interest more money was spent developing plans for the failed Garden Bridge project than TfL has spent on maintaining 25 River Thames crossings during the last 10 years.

