

Come on board

Making TfL accessible for all

Over the past two decades, Transport for London (TfL) have transformed their transport system beyond recognition. Are you getting the most out of the steps they have taken to make it more accessible?

London has one of the most accessible transport networks in the world. In the past decade, nearly 50 stations across the Tube and London Overground network have become step-free and opened up millions more journeys for wheelchair and mobility aid users.

There are more than 200 stations with level access across London Underground, London Overground, Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and Tramlink. As part of the Mayor's new Business Plan, 30 more stations will be made step-free by 2021/22. This will increase step-free access coverage to 40 per cent, from the current 26 per cent.

All station staff and bus drivers undergo disability equality training, designed and delivered by disabled people. All Tube station staff recently underwent an extensive week-long customer

service training course, with focus on assisting disabled customers. We have now started Hello London! training, a similar course with all 24,700 London bus drivers.

This year TfL ran a six-week trial of a 'Please offer me a seat' badge and card, to help customers with invisible impairments, conditions and injuries get a seat when they need one. The trial was successful in helping people get a seat. They are now developing a full roll-out to all customers. This is planned for early 2017.

There are various different services available to those that may need further assistance. TfL's Travel Mentoring service offers telephone advice to help plan an accessible route and can provide a mentor for your first few journeys.

TfL's Travel Support card gives individuals the opportunity to travel independently by letting station staff and bus drivers know that they need assistance. The card has blank boxes for customers to write their name. You can download and print a travel support card from their website.

TfL operate a turn up and go service so people don't have to pre-book assistance in advance and they can make a spontaneous journey.

It is still important to check before you travel. TfL's Journey Planner helps you plan your journey in advance



giving you options to meet your requirements, such as step-free access. You can choose your preferred mode of transport and adjust walking time. Journey Planner will advise you of the busiest time at stations if you wish to avoid them and make a more comfortable journey. Try planning your next journey here <https://tfl.gov.uk/plan-a-journey/>

They also produce a range of maps and guides, available to order online or through their call centre.

Find out more by visiting tfl.gov.uk/accessibility; emailing tflaccessibility@tfl.gov.uk, calling us on 0343 222 1234 or by following @Tflaccess on Twitter.

Amy Edgar
TfL Communications and Engagement Officer.

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: chrisbarker46@gmail.com; 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. Previous issues of the newsletter can be found at <http://bettertransport-london.org.uk>.





Slower Speeds in London

Ever since the first 20mph zones were introduced in 1991 in Kingston-upon-Thames, London has grappled with how to use lower speed limits to reduce the danger from motor vehicles.

Up until the recession of 2008, the trend was to introduce traffic-calmed 20mph zones in residential areas. High streets and main roads were rarely covered but they are key, as this is where around three-quarters of all serious casualties occur and the impact of motor vehicle speeds is most felt.

The movement towards wide-area 20mph speed limits began to take hold to give consistency across far larger areas and to include these high streets and main roads. Islington was the first London borough to introduce a borough-wide 20mph limit in January 2013. This was swiftly followed by Camden and the City of London. Eight London boroughs now have 20mph limits on all (or almost all) of the roads they manage. Across London more than two-fifths of the population now lives on 20mph roads. In Inner London more than two-thirds live on 20mph roads. With the recent proposal to trial 20mph limits in the City of Westminster, in Inner London only Kensington & Chelsea has no policy of support for 20mph limits.

Many Outer London boroughs are also introducing 20mph limits on all but main roads. These include Haringey, Croydon, Hounslow, Ealing and Waltham Forest.

As boroughs have been adopting 20mph limits, TfL has also come to see them as a key plank of their strategy to reduce road casualties and improve how places feel. GLA-backed policy reports have given TfL support for this approach. This started with the Vision for Cycling in 2013 which stated there is 'clear evidence that traffic travelling at speeds of

20mph improves the safety of both cyclists and pedestrians', included the Roads Task Force report and most recently the Healthy Streets approach. There are now numerous stretches of 20mph on the Red Route network in central London. Notable locations include the two north-south routes in the City of London over Blackfriars Bridge and London Bridge and Southwark Street and Stamford Street in SE1.

TfL has also been working to increase the effectiveness of 20mph limits. This includes mandatory speed control on all new buses from 2018, increased enforcement using Community Roadwatch and engineering changes that range from removing gyratories through to centre white line removal.

The vision of the new Mayor is set out in the City for All Londoners document and aims to 'encourage cycling and walking on "Healthy Streets"' and adopt a 'Vision Zero' approach to road safety. 20mph is embedded in that approach and we hope will become the default for London's streets and roads in the not too distant future.

As a result, London now sits alongside many UK cities that have adopted wide-area 20mph limits including Birmingham, Manchester, Bristol, Cambridge, Oxford, Liverpool, Nottingham, Leicester and Edinburgh. 20mph limits are making London a better place to be.

Jeremy Leach, 20's Plenty – London campaign organiser



HSUK – an alternative to HS2

May I draw your attention to an alternative high-speed rail scheme for the whole of Britain proposed by High-speed UK? Their proposed high-speed line, apparently, avoids all Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty, it follows existing transport corridors and reaches Central London via Brent Cross.

Like HS2, HSUK proposes Euston as its London intercity terminus. However, HSUK wants commuter services currently terminating at Euston to be diverted onto Crossrail via a short connection in the Old Oak Common area. There is spare capacity here because no fewer than 14 of the 24 peak trains per hour running westbound through

the Crossrail tunnels are currently planned to reverse at Paddington. The platform capacity at Euston released by diverting West Coast mail line commuter services onto Crossrail would, according to HSUK, enable Euston to accommodate the high-speed Intercity services it proposes within Euston's existing footprint, thereby avoiding the demolition and devastation around Euston in connection with HS2's proposals. Even Lord Adonis, the 'father of HS2', is reportedly very unhappy about HS2's current proposals between Old Oak Common and Euston.

When Government looked into diverting WCML commuter services onto Crossrail in connection with HS2, it was rejected on the grounds of 'value for money for the taxpayer' but I wonder if this says more about HS2 as a whole than about this particular suggestion.

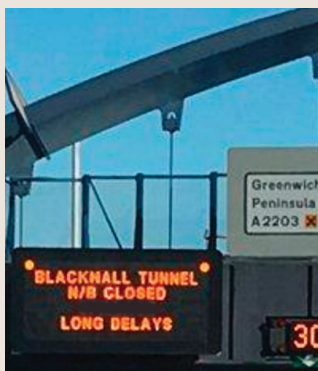
Neil Roth

Charlton User Group reborn

The transport user group in Charlton has been relaunched as Transport for Charlton.

The relaunch took place on 12th October. A well attended meeting received an upbeat presentation concerning rail services in the south east following the great London Bridge rebuild. Users who attended were also concerned about bus services to North Greenwich. Most of the routes are operated by Go-Ahead which is keen on turning buses short to restore the service when congestion causes delays.

With the Blackwall Tunnel always prone to closure, this is a regular occurrence in these parts.



Archway and Highbury Corner

Two gyratories on the same road out of London are in the process of being removed.

On each one side of the square, which in both cases is by the entrance to a station, is being reserved for cyclists and pedestrians, greatly enlarging the pedestrian circulating area. The casualty in both cases is connectivity between buses and between buses and trains.

Buses are being diverted away from the station and bus stops are scattered to surrounding streets.

Campaigners in both places are urging that buses should be allowed to share space with cyclists and pedestrians on the arm outside each station so that passengers can make transfers easily.

The mayor's fares freeze pledge relies on growing use of public transport and TfL needs to reverse the decline in bus use in central London, much of it caused by schemes under the last mayor which ignored the needs of buses.

Car-free Fly-free days

Emergency tools for climate action.



2016 is predicted to be the warmest year since records began.

Regardless of climate change denial or more accurately climate change deception from some unscrupulous quarters, most people are waking up to global warming crisis and realising that urgent action is required.

2014 saw the initiation of emergency car bans to cut toxic air pollution in Paris, where odd and even number plates were banned

on consecutive days. The successful reduction in Paris's air pollution encouraged Athens, Milan, Delhi, Rome, Mexico City, Beijing and Madrid to follow with their own car bans in 2015, as suffocating air pollution reached frightening levels.

In Paris in September 2015, leading up to COP21 (the 21st session of the Conference of the Parties), Mayor Anne Hidalgo chose a car-free day to emphasise how cities around the world can cut both their carbon and air pollution emissions by reducing reliance on motor vehicles and encouraging walking, cycling and Public Transport. She is now chair of the C40 (the network of the world's megacities committed to addressing climate change) and Sadiq Khan is vice-chair.

Aviation and motor vehicles are major contributors to greenhouse gases. One return flight from London to New York uses up your en-

tire personal carbon emissions for the year. In 2010 when the Icelandic Volcano erupted and flights in Europe were grounded for a week, there was a reduction of 2.8 million tons of carbon released into the atmosphere.

Meanwhile cars are the fastest growing contributor to carbon emissions in the world.

In Seoul, a voluntary one day a week car-free day has reduced Carbon Emissions by 10 per cent.

70 per cent of global greenhouse gases come from cities, even though they only make up 2 per cent of global land. If we are to turn around global warming we need to do it in cities. Whilst we transition to cleaner modes of transport and renewable energy, we need to start implementing immediate and regular climate action such as car-free and fly-free Sundays.

Rosalind Readhead

Tube station lifts

Around a quarter of London's tube stations are accessible for disabled people but Transport for All reports that an increasing number of lifts which make stations accessible are out of order.

In 2015 the number of times a lift was closed was 65. From January to the 11th October 2016 the number has reached a new high with 142 reported issues.

In a number of cases lifts are closed because of the absence of a trained and licenced member of staff. Transport for All respects TfL's policy but says there is no excuse for them to not have a sufficient amount of staff at each station to guarantee that the lift will be available at all times.

Oxford Street

The mayor has promised to pedestrianise Oxford Street by 2020. In preparation for this TfL has already reduced the number of buses on Oxford Street by curtailing or diverting a few routes but a more radical proposal is now on the table, reducing the number of buses by 40 per cent. This will be achieved by diverting a number of routes via alternative roads, for example 23 will be curtailed at Lancaster Gate and 137 at Marble Arch; meanwhile 6 will be diverted to run via Piccadilly. TfL say that the introduction of the Elizabeth Line will reduce the need for buses, particularly from areas that the new line will serve.

After reducing the number of buses it will become important not to allow the space to be taken up by taxis and we await news on how this is to be managed.

Full information can be seen at www.tfl.gov.uk/west-end-bus-changes. Deadline for response is 29th January.

More electric buses

Central London bus routes 507 and 521 will be operated by 51 fully electric buses from the end of 2016. The buses, built in China, will be able to run for 16 hours without the need for recharging. There are 300 single-deck buses operating in central London and the aim is for all to be zero emission by 2020.



Farewell to the Boris bus

There are to be no more orders for the 'New bus for London', the product of the costly vanity project implemented by mayor Boris Johnson in 2012. The original intention was that there would be 2000. The number has now reached 800 and there will be no more. Mayor Sadiq Khan says that ending the purchasing of these expensive buses will help his pledge to freeze fares for four years.

The buses have been widely criticised, not least in this newsletter. Not only are they considerably more expensive than conventional buses, but they have turned out to be uncomfortable and unreliable. One of their main features, the open rear platform, is now permanently closed and 300 members of staff, recruited to stop people jumping on and off, have lost their jobs.

Confounding the forecasts

It is well known that forecasts for rail reopenings often hugely underestimate the popularity of the services.

Railfuture draws our attention to two examples in East London. The

first is the newly reopened Lea Bridge station.

TfL's forecast was for 350,000 passengers by 2031. Ten weeks after opening patronage was already running at about 250,000

passengers per annum. This is for a service of two trains per hour. In 2018 this is scheduled to be increased to four trains per hour. Patronage will then no doubt soar.

The other example is the new

connection within the ticket barriers between Hackney Downs and Hackney Central. TfL's forecast was for 3,700 transfers after four years. Numbers have already reached 4,700.

NEWS ROUNDUP

TfL to act on unsafe lorries

The mayor is preparing to act against dangerous lorries with poor lines of sight. One way to make lorries safer is to demand clear vision panels in passenger-side doors and lower drivers' seats (see newsletter 26). TfL, however, say that these changes would only deliver a very limited improvement in vision for the driver and would not be suitable for all vehicle types. Instead the mayor has launched TfL's 'Direct Vision Standard' which will categorise HGVs using a five star rating system, ranging from zero stars for vehicles with the lowest direct vision, three stars for good levels of vision, to five stars for the highest levels. The standard assesses and rates how much an HGV driver can see directly from their cab in relation to other road users. The plan is that the most dangerous 'off-road' lorries will be banned from the capital's roads by January 2020 and that only HGVs meeting 3 stars as part of the new standard will be allowed on London's roads by 2024.

Zero-rated lorries operating in London have been involved in about 70 per cent of cyclist deaths involving HGVs in the past three years and lorries were connected with 58 per cent of cycling deaths in 2014 and 2015.

Good news and bad news

A number of sustainable East London river crossings have been approved by mayor Sadiq Khan. Further extension of the Overground from Barking Riverside under the Thames to Abbey Wood will now go ahead, justifying London CBT's argument that the Riverside terminus should be situated at a low enough level to make access to a tunnel possible.

The Overground extension was introduced as an alternative to the proposed DLR extension from Gallions Reach towards Dagenham. An extension from Gallions Reach under the Thames to Thamesmead is also proposed.

There are two further sustainable crossings. One is a bridge for pedestrians and cyclists from

Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf and the other is a ferry from North Greenwich to the Isle of Dogs.

But the bad news is that the new road tunnel from North Greenwich to Silvertown will also go ahead bringing more traffic and pollution into this part of North London. The 'No to Silvertown Tunnel' campaign points out that the tunnel would create more congestion and pollution by encouraging more traffic. They say that a number of London boroughs including Lewisham, Hackney, Southwark and Newham have expressed serious reservations about the scheme. A petition against the scheme can be found at <http://www.silvertowntunnel.co.uk/>.

CS11 woes

Opponents of Cycle Superhighway 11 that will run south from Swiss Cottage, past Regents Park and into the West End held a demonstration on 8th October. The scheme will result in the closure of the north end of Avenue Road, at present used by all south-bound traffic, to all but cyclists and southbound buses. Some of the gates to Regents Park will also be closed to reduce car traffic and make the park safer for cyclists and pedestrians. Opponents say this will displace traffic and create rat runs in residential streets. In response Westminster Living Streets and the London Cycling Campaign organised a counter demonstration to show that there is significant public support for this important addition to London's evolving Active Travel infrastructure. To the extent that new cycling provision reduces the overwhelming dominance of motor vehicles, Londoners on foot can also benefit.

Sadiq Khan tackles pollution

According to Clean Air London, our streets have the highest levels of NO2 of any capital city in Europe. Boris Johnson introduced measures to deal with the problem when he was mayor but they were widely regarded as too little and too late. Sadiq Khan now proposes to speed this up. He promises £875 million to clean up London's air.

Whilst an Ultra Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) covering the same area as the Congestion Charge Zone was due to come into operation in 2020 it is now proposed to bring this forward to 2019. At the same time the ULEZ will be extended to cover the whole of London for

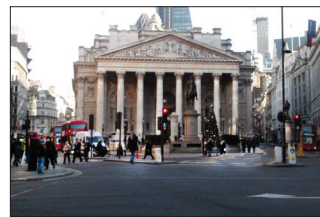
heavy vehicles, buses and coaches and to the North and South Circular roads for all vehicles.

The mayor also wants to tackle pollution from older (pre 2005) vehicles by imposing an emissions surcharge (ES), to be called a T-charge, on vehicles driving into the Congestion Charge Zone in 2017.

Diesel is also to be phased out from buses and taxis by 2020. The mayor has pledged that by that time all double deck buses will be hybrids and single deckers electric or hydrogen fuelled. £312 million of the extra cash will be spent on this. Living Streets goes further and says the target should be to ban all diesel vehicles in central London by 2025 as other major cities - Athens, Paris, Barcelona and Mexico have decided.

Friends of the Earth are organising a central London demonstration on 28th January in central London. Check out their website for further information.

Bank junction redesign



The junction by the Bank of England in the City is one of the most dangerous in London for pedestrians. The City has now decided to ban all traffic apart from buses from the junction between 7am and 7pm Mondays to Fridays. In the teeth of opposition from taxi drivers this will include taxis. They will be allowed to come up to the junction to pick up or set down passengers but not traverse the junction.

Heathrow on again

After years of dithering and Cameron's 'No ifs! No buts! No third runway!' Theresa May has finally come down on the side of the expansion of Heathrow. But the battle is by no means over. Client Earth has joined with Greenpeace and neighbourhood groups in a legal challenge of the decision. The crucial argument involves air pollution. Heathrow is already in breach of pollution limits. As Client Earth CEO James Thornton said: 'even without expansion, the area around Heathrow will continue to be in breach of legal air pollution limits

until 2025 at least under the government's current projections.'

There is a more fundamental issue. The world is in danger of breaching 2 per cent increase in CO2 emissions which scientists reckon is the absolute limit without triggering catastrophic and irreversible climate change. Any increase in runway capacity will make the achievement of the target much more difficult, whether Heathrow, Gatwick or anywhere else.

Euston Express

A bold idea to reduce costs and demolition around Euston for HS2 has been published by Lord Berkeley. It starts with the proposition that there is no need for continental size trains on HS2 as through links with the continent are no longer envisaged. It would thus be possible for HS2 trains to approach Euston on the existing lines. Capacity, he argues, is readily available.

East of Queens Park there are six tracks, two for the Watford DC trains plus occasional freight trains, two for slow main line trains and two for fast. The DC lines are normally used by three trains an hour (TfL plans to increase this to four). Lord Berkeley suggests that these lines could also be used by slow main line trains, particularly if some were diverted to Crossrail via Old Oak Common. The existing slow lines could then be used as the new fast lines and the existing fast lines would then be available for HS2. Old Oak Common to Queens Park would require a tunnel only one third the length of the planned tunnel ending at Euston.

With all trains being of British loading gauge there would be no need to separate HS2 trains from trains on the classic network. This would save a considerable amount of space at Euston. There would need to be four extra platforms (22 against 18 currently) but there is room for these to be squeezed into the current footprint. There would, however, be a need to lengthen platforms and it is suggested that this could be accommodated at the concourse end by extending the station towards Euston Road, requiring the resiting of the bus station and the demolition of office blocks including the 'Black Tower', Network Rail's former headquarters.

These plans, says Lord Berkeley, would be quicker to build, cost less and avoid the extensive demolition and works around Camden Town.

