

**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.



No 48 May 2023

# ULEZ Expansion

**Sadiq Khan's plan to extend the Ultra Low Emission Zone to the edge of Greater London on 29th August is running into trouble with eleven outer London boroughs including Labour controlled Barking and Dagenham. Interestingly, these boroughs seem to be the ones which are doing least to help their residents switch to greener transport.**

Opposition is also rising from authorities beyond the Greater London boundary, including Surrey. Complaints centre upon the fact that their residents will have to pay the charge although they have no right to vote on it. They are also saying that more time is needed and that the date of implementation should be put back. Amongst other complainants is Unite the Union which has branded the expansion nothing less than 'anti-worker'. Five authorities – Bexley, Bromley, Har-

row and Hillingdon and Surrey County Council – are mounting a legal challenge to the expansion which will be heard in the High Court later this year.

It could be that the motivating factor is the vociferous opposition by drivers who resent any restriction on their right to drive however they like but their opposition centres chiefly around the level of compensation available to people who find their vehicle is not compatible with the new restrictions. According to TfL 90 per cent of London registered vehicles are now compatible.

The Mayor has put £110 million into the compensation pot. Anyone who runs a non-compliant vehicle and is eligible for one or more of a long list of benefits is entitled to £2000 towards a new car or van or a lesser amount if compensation is partly in the form of an annual bus and tram pass. There are lesser amounts for

motor cycles and up to £5000 for scrapping a wheelchair accessible vehicle. The Mayor and TfL are also announcing a range of ULEZ support offers from businesses for all Londoners, including additional exclusive offers for successful applicants of the scrappage scheme. This will enable Londoners to benefit from discounts and promotions on subscriptions, rentals and purchases of bicycles, e-bikes, cargo bikes, cars and vans. Boroughs claim that this pot is not large enough and will run out before everyone is compensated.

So far 5,000 applications to the ULEZ scrappage fund have been approved, mostly to van drivers.

The Liberal Democrat group on the Greater London Assembly proposed a motion to double the compensation pot by another £100 million and also to include all Blue Badge holders irrespective of their benefit

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Our podcasts are also available on the website. The latest deals with the issue of the Silvertown Tunnel. Dominic Leggett represents *Stop the Silvertown Tunnel Coalition* and answers questions.

holders irrespective of their benefit status. Under the scheme Blue Badge holders of certain benefits have a grace period up to October 2027 to comply. The motion was carried unanimously because both Labour and the Conservatives abstained. The resolution is not binding on the Mayor who might choose to disregard it. Sadiq Khan has now asked the Prime Minister for the funds to double the compensation package.

## Superloop

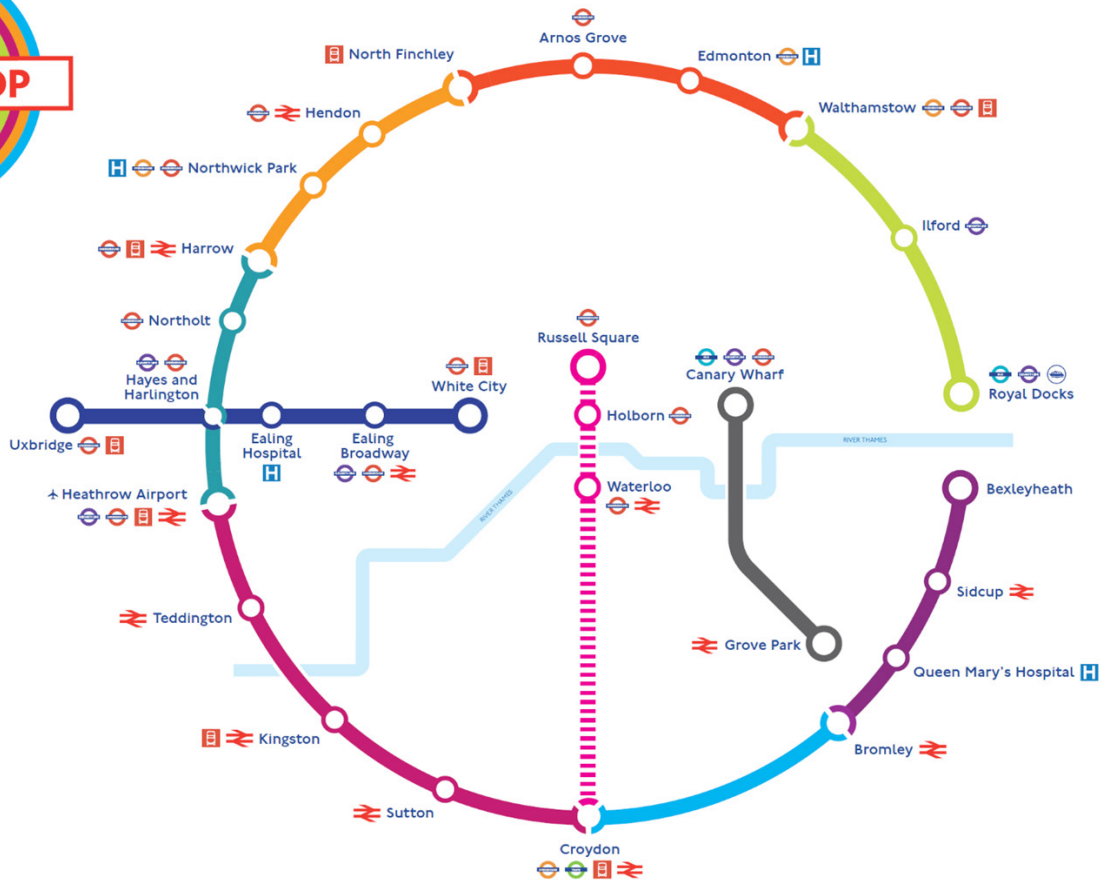
Success of the ULEZ expansion will depend partly on the expansion of bus services in outer London and in furtherance of this aim the Mayor has launched 'Superloop' which will be a network of express buses linking outer London suburbs. The present X26 route linking Heathrow with Croydon will be incorporated as will X140 linking

see page2





- Royal Docks to Walthamstow
- Walthamstow to North Finchley
- North Finchley to Harrow
- Harrow to Heathrow
- Heathrow to Croydon
- Croydon to Bromley
- Bromley to Bexleyheath
- Canary Wharf to Grove Park
- Uxbridge to White City
- Russell Square to Croydon  
Peak service only



MAYOR OF LONDON

Routes and stops are illustrative only and subject to consultation



Heathrow with Harrow. New routes will link Harrow with North Finchley (X183), North Finchley with Walthamstow (X34) and Walthamstow with the Royal Docks (X123). South of the Thames, Croydon will link with Bromley (X119) and Bromley with Bexleyheath (X269). (An extension of Tramlink from Beckenham to Bromley might do more than a bus would.) Also included in the Superloop concept will be the existing

express routes, X68 from Russell Square to Croydon, 607 from White City to Uxbridge and, in due course, the proposed X239 to run through Silvertown Tunnel linking Canary Wharf and Grove Park. Buses will feature Superloop branding to help them stand out from others. Sadiq Khan has said that it will be 40 per cent ready by this summer.

London TravelWatch commented: 'These express bus

routes will hopefully make a difference for Londoners who live in outer boroughs. Helping people get around for work, healthcare appointments, schools and shopping trips. We've been calling for more orbital bus routes for some time as we know that people value being able to travel across boroughs where they can connect to local transport interchanges.

'We need these extra services to be in place as soon as possi-

ble - to coincide with any ULEZ expansion later this year. 'Superloop' will only truly be transformational if buses are given priority on the road. After all, a "limited stop" express bus stuck in traffic is still just a bus stuck in traffic'

Overall there will be more than a million extra kilometres of bus services in outer London paid for by an operating surplus which TfL is set to achieve in 2023/24.

## HS2 stalls

Escalating costs have forced a delay in the opening of HS2. The latest plan envisages Old Oak Common to

Birmingham services starting with just three trains an hour in June 2030. The Elizabeth Line trains which currently terminate at Paddington will be extended to Old Oak Common at the latest by that date and up to 1100 passengers will descend onto the Elizabeth Line. An Elizabeth Line train can carry up to 1500 passengers which might be enough to accommodate them all, but

Sadiq Khan is asking the government for funds for additional trains. With trains full of travellers from Heathrow as well as from HS2 there might be a problem for those who want to board at Paddington.

But Old Oak Common is not only the site for the HS2 station but is also a major development area with a target for 24,000 new homes and tens of thousands of jobs. These developments will also require an enhanced service on the Elizabeth Line and TfL are asking the government for funds to pay for additional trains to satisfy all these demands.

The huge work at Euston is running way behind schedule. A Christmas blockade was

scheduled to close Euston in 2028 to complete the station. There would then be an 18-month testing period hopefully allowing services of 10 trains an hour to start in December 2034. However work at Euston has now been paused following the government's announcement of a two year delay to construction and estimates suggest it will be 2041 before trains reach Euston.

There is increasing anger at the disruption caused to residents affected by the extensive work around Euston. Camden Council leader Georgia Gould has now called for the 60 acres site to be opened up for community-uses during the delay.





graphic: Lois Dodds

# LEFT BEHIND LONDONERS

**'1 in 6 Londoners who answered our online survey said they had been unable to buy a ticket without a smartphone or internet connection.' So says Michael Roberts, Chief Executive of London TravelWatch, in his introduction to a new report published in March.**

The report focusses on people who are digitally excluded including many old and disabled people. Being unable or unwilling

to use a smart phone or the internet means makes it imperative that there is a human presence at stations and proposals to close ticket offices are worrying many. The increasing tendency to require payment for tickets online or by bank card is an issue which worries many. If there is no opportunity to pay by cash there is no way people without bank accounts can buy tickets, and this may well breach the 2010 Equalities Act.

The report makes nine recommendations. The first is that fares should be equal whether purchased online or in person. Secondly is a demand that staff are always available to help people to buy tickets and to assist them on and off stations and trains. Having a member of staff on board trains is one way of achieving this but many trains, such as on the underground, have only the driver on board. TfL ensure that all stations are staffed but this does not apply on main line railway lines.

Another recommendation is the provision of more accessible services and resources. This includes accessible ticket machines and making sure physical posters, maps and timetables use accessible text. Physical assistance for disabled people is also important including lifts at

stations and level train boarding points. Information should also be available in accessible format such as Braille.

Other recommendations include support and mentoring services for those who are disadvantaged, consulting on accessibility and engaging with groups working with disadvantaged people and maintaining non-digital options before and during travel.

## New hope for West London orbital rail link

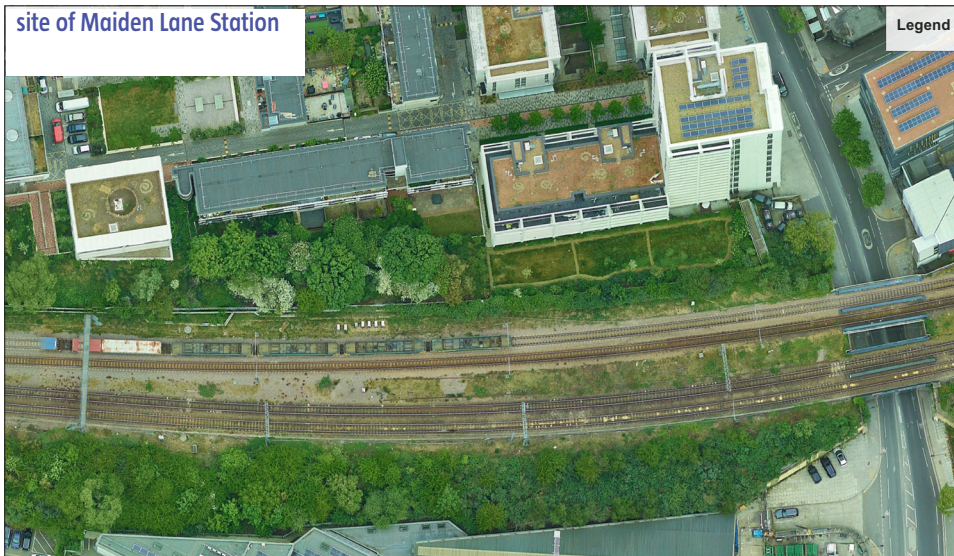
**Hopes for a passenger rail link between Hounslow and Hendon have been given a boost by Sadiq Khan confirming that planning is underway.**

Engineering consultants are in the process of being selected to work on a detailed design and Khan said 'timetable assessment undertaken by Network Rail is nearing completion and has identified that a viable West London Orbital service is expected to be achievable.'

Trains would use the Dudding Hill line which links Old Oak Common and Cricklewood and is currently used only by freight trains. They would use the existing line between Hounslow and Brentford and then branch off onto the North London line with a possible new station at Lionel Road. There would be new stations at Old Oak Common Lane (for exchange with the Elizabeth line and HS2) and at Harlesden (for the Bakerloo and Overground lines) and Neasden (for the Jubilee line). Trains would then serve Brent Cross West and Hendon in one direction and Cricklewood and West Hampstead Thameslink in the other.

The service was first proposed by the Mayor in his 2018 Transport Strategy and should be ready for opening in the early 2030s.

# Should Maiden Lane North London line station be re-opened?



**Maiden Lane NLL station was closed in 1917 as a wartime economy measure and, like many others, never reopened.**

So, Overground trains now run 1.75 km nonstop between Camden Road and Caledonian Road & Barnsbury through what has become a built-up area. The site is about 1 km north of King's Cross along York Way and has many railway lines in its vicinity but no existing stations.

Confusingly, what is now York Way had been called Maiden Lane for centuries before 1887 when the eponymous station opened but was later renamed 'York Road' (hence the Piccadilly line station, about 400 metres south, which closed in 1932) and renamed 'York Way' in 1938. The road now forms the boundary between Camden and Islington boroughs.

Immediately north of the site, Camden Council's Maiden Lane Housing Estate, was built between 1979 and 1982. More recent developments have tak-

en place on the vast railway lands north of King's Cross, including The Triangle Site, also on York Way, between the erstwhile Maiden Lane and York Road stations: <https://www.kingscross.co.uk/the-triangle-site>

It has often been suggested that York Road station be reopened to serve the major development sites nearby, but that station is underground: bringing it back into operation in accordance with modern standards would be very expensive and would increase journey times on Piccadilly line trains operating through the station.

It was Camden Councillor and London Assembly Member Sian Berry (Green Party) who suggested reopening Maiden Lane station to FTL and our initial investigations indicate that an island platform (like that at Caledonian Road & Barnsbury) between the Overground tracks would be feasible, subject to the granting of minor derogations and being able to construct modern facilities while trains

continue to operate through the site. Sian Berry has indicated she will now pursue reopening Maiden Lane with the relevant organisations.

All the indications are that Maiden Lane station would benefit many residents within its walk-in catchment area, as well as providing interchange with buses along York Way.

When closed in 1917, Maiden Lane station had two side platforms serving the northern pair of NLL tracks, but the line was re-signalled in 2010 and the tracks rearranged with Overground trains now using the centre pair.

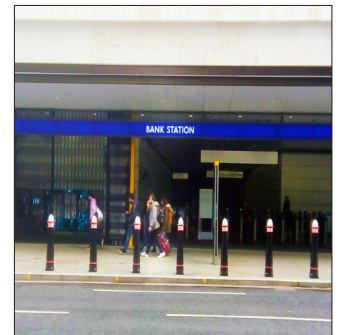
The old station building was on the north side of the four tracks and is planned to be used as the eastern entry/exit for the Camden Highline project, if that goes ahead despite the opposition of Future Transport London. Camden Highline patrons would add to the number of passengers using the reopened station.

Neil Roth

## ALL CHANGE AT BANK

The enlargement of Bank underground station is now complete and work is continuing on traffic calming the Bank road junction where Poultry, Princes Street, Threadneedle Street, Cornhill, Lombard Street, King William Street and Queen Victoria Street all meet. Since May 2017 traffic, apart from buses and cycles, have been banned from the junction between 7am and 7pm, but advantage of this change has now been taken to widen pavements, make Poultry one way and close Queen Victoria Street and Threadneedle Street to traffic. The area is transformed and the junction now swarms with pedestrians.

TfL claims that these changes have shaved 15 minutes off bus journey times in the peaks. The City of London carried out a feasibility study looking at whether to reintroduce motor vehicles into the area in April 2022 but concluded that removing the scheme would lead bring significant delays for commuters on some 21 bus routes.





**SCRAP**  
the Camden Highline!

**BACK**  
public transport!



*(The two options use the SAME land - BOTH are not possible.)*

**“THE CAMDEN HIGHLINE”**  
£50-million tourist attraction - promoters claim it’s “temporary”.  
Unclear funding, including of removal.

**“CAMDEN ROAD PLATFORM 3”**  
Project of Sadiq Khan and the rail freight industry. Allows 50% more London Overground trains.

[www.futuretransportlondon.org](http://www.futuretransportlondon.org)

## WHAT PRICE THE CAMDEN HIGH LINE?

There is a prospect of a ‘Camden Highline’ being built on the currently unused track-bed of the North London Line across the borough of Camden.

Unlike all other highlines in the world, the land chosen is still needed for railway use in the future, possibly the near future.

Future Transport London has long opposed this Highline scheme, and it is currently running a series of adverts to that effect in the Camden New Journal (CNJ).

The Highline’s planning application says that the ‘park-in-the-sky’ is for 20 years ‘or perhaps 30 years’. The first stage of the plan has been considered by Camden’s planning committee, and the council’s planning report simply treats it as a permanent attraction. The Highline promoters said in the CNJ in 2018 that the park would cost £50 million to construct, although never how much to remove it, or who would pay. There is no indication if the promised later two phases would ever become planning applications. It may never go anywhere.

What would happen in any case if the business became insolvent, with no private-sector investors to bail it out? Would the London Borough of Camden finance its survival, and from which budget?

Who would pay for removal, whether long-planned or completely unexpected? There would be few physical assets for funding

that. Would we see the metal staircases appearing on eBay?

When property or tourist attraction developers start to call their unrealistic schemes ‘exciting’ and ‘transformative’ we need eternal vigilance from the public and to start counting the spoons. Can anyone see similarities with Boris’s Garden Bridge and the Marble Arch Mound?

Sadiq Khan published a 2021 ‘London Rail Freight Strategy’ with the private-sector freight industry to reopen still-existing Platform Three at Camden Road Station, instead of building the Highline. That would immediately allow 50 per cent more London Overground trains between Stratford and Camden, and also allow quicker recovery of the whole North London Line from service disruption.

There is a second issue though. Freight transport must be treated with the importance to UK prosperity that it deserves. The government has published a 2022 ‘National Freight Strategy’, aiming to “make end-to-end journeys more efficient and reliable” and to “support wider government objectives around decarbonisation”.

It also requires ‘rail routes with under-utilised capacity [to be upgraded] to ease road congestion’. We already know

that the private rail-freight companies want easier flows across London, since the capital is the only route between dozens of UK distribution centres and the east coast deep-water ports and the Channel Tunnel.

The next Amazon widget that you have delivered may likely have been made in China, passed through the Suez Canal, been unloaded at Felixstowe or Thames Gateway from a ship on its way to Rotterdam, and finally travelled through Camden Road Station (or the Hampstead Heath tunnel) on its way to a huge Midlands distribution warehouse.

A lot of UK food, drink and engineering exports go in the other direction as well.

The rail-freight industry made quite clear in 2021 that the North London Line between Maiden Lane and Camden Road Station is a major capacity bottleneck that needs sorting.

With a combination of government, Transport for London and freight industry money the problem is fixable over the next few years. But that can only happen if the tourist Camden Highline is stopped here and now.

**John Cox**

### BOOK REVIEW

**THE RAILWAYS OF LONDON DOCKLANDS.** Their history and development by Jonathan Willis. Pen and Sword books, 2022.

Jon Willis worked for the GLC, LT and TfL and was a key figure in many of the transport planning decisions taken to provide the modern rail network we now have, serving what had become the vast, derelict acres of London Docklands after the last dock closed in 1970.

Jon’s first-hand account of the context to these decisions is highly instructive for anyone wishing to promote sustainable urban modes. He also details the history of the enclosed docks and the freight/passenger railways built to serve them, fragments of which were sustainably repurposed to carry sections of the DLR, the Jubilee line

extension and the Elizabeth line. At Canary Wharf, disused docks were repurposed to accommodate the Jubilee and Elizabeth line stations.

Jon has an engineering background, and he explains the significant engineering constraints which led to some of those planning decisions. The book’s Forward is written by Lord (Michael) Heseltine who was responsible for setting up the Docklands Development Corporation and giving the go-ahead for the DLR.

Although I worked on some aspects of the DLR (the bizarre, inward-opening doors of the first fleet were the first thing to strike me) and of Crossrail (Jon was my line manager at one stage) many nuggets in this book were new to me. I learnt that the initial proposed location of the DLR platforms at Bank had risked undermining

the weak foundations of the Mansion House and causing construction noise for a Lord Mayor’s whole year term of office.

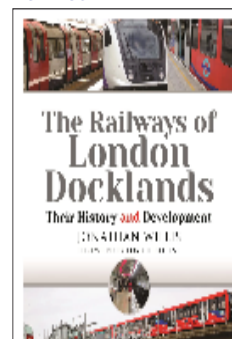
Jon’s idea to relocate the DLR platforms vertically below those of the Northern line avoided those risks and enabled direct interchange to be provided with the District & Circle lines at Monument. I still wonder why DLR trains at Bank normally reverse there via a siding when energy, maintenance, staff, and time could be saved more sustainably by reversing direction in the platforms there, as trains do at every other DLR terminus and almost every Underground terminus in London.

The book explains how important it is to find feasible and acceptable alignments for which ever sustainable mode is being considered and how difficult it was to forecast the likely patron-

age, as each element of the Docklands rail network was being planned. It proved very wise to allow wherever possible for potential growth in patronage more than the forecasts.

This book is wonderfully illustrated with relevant photos and maps, many in colour. My Kindle, on which I first read it in black & white, could not do justice to the fine illustrations.

**Neil Roth**



### Liberating kerb space

A number of boroughs are planning to reduce the amount of kerb space available for the parking of cars. Lambeth estimates that 94 per cent of kerb space is either freely available for parking or has yellow lines or is opposite a private driveway. The plans aim to reduce it by 25 per cent reallocating space to bus lanes, trees, sustainable drainage systems, parklets or cycle parking.

Lewisham estimates that 60 per cent of kerb space is available for car parking and intends to convert some to trees, EV charging points, cycle parking and safer crossings and junctions. They also want to increase the number of spaces for disabled and car club parking. They admit that Lewisham allows more unrestricted car parking than any other inner London borough. They say: 'The proposed improvements aim to make better use of this space in order to prioritise active travel, create safer streets for residents and help make Lewisham a net-zero borough by 2030.'

### TfL's property development

TfL is the third biggest property owner in London after the Emirate of Qatar and the Mayor of London. A property arm, TfL Properties, was created in 2012 to develop land for housing and offices. The largest scheme currently under way is at Earls Court with homes, jobs and community venues planned and a central park.

In the suburbs attention is concentrated on the redevelopment of station car parks for homes. There is a particular concentration of eligible stations in north west London and there are plans for the conversion of car parks to homes at East Finchley, Arnos Grove, Cockfosters, High Barnet, Stanmore and Canons Park, amongst others. Providing facilities for commuters to drive to tube stations is becoming more and more of an anachronism at this time where the reduction of traffic is a necessary aim and it would also increase the number of homes. Predictably there has been a backlash by drivers and their

supporters. At some stations plans have been approved and at others the outcome is awaited.

Elsewhere concentration is on commercial development. There are plans to build above Bank, Paddington and Southwark stations.

### Countdown upgrade

Route 63 is not only getting new buses (see newsletter no. 46) but also getting new style Countdown signs along its route. These new signs will eventually be rolled out in every London borough, boosting the total in the capital by 12 per cent.

Route 63 is 'becoming a bit of a test bed for quality bus travel initiatives that bus companies in the provinces have been doing for years', according to Roger French in his blog (<https://busandtrainuser.com/>). Countdown information, in greyscale to save on electricity, is contained in the bus stop flag. At some stops, information normally provided in printed form in cases on the bus stop pole is provided instead in electronic cases. These can contain all the information normally found in printed form and more.

TfL have for some time held to the policy that, although they will replace Countdown signs which have to be temporarily withdrawn, they will not install new ones unless they are paid for by local authorities. But in a new move, 300 new boards are being installed in East London.

### More roads at 20

Kingston-upon-Thames is moving to a borough-wide 20mph default. Remaining TfL Red Route roads in Camden, Islington, Haringey, Hackney and Tower Hamlets are now 20mph. By September this should be extended to Greenwich, Kensington & Chelsea, Lewisham, Southwark, Wandsworth, Merton, Bromley and Lambeth, including sections of the A205 South Circular, New Cross Road, Tower Bridge Road and Stockwell Road.

Collisions involving vulnerable road users on TfL controlled roads since the introduction of 20 mph limits have reduced dramatically. Collisions involving death or serious injury have

reduced by 25 percent, collisions involving vulnerable road users by 36 per cent and collisions involving people walking by a massive 63 per cent.

Enforcement of speeding offenses is rising as police devote more resources to this important task: 93,000 in 2018 rising to 478,685 in 2021/2.

It also seems that compliance with the new restrictions is also rising. This is helped by speed limiters being applied experimentally to some TfL buses and other vehicles.

### Renaming the Overground

The Mayor's manifesto commitment to give individual names to the various routes of London's Overground system is now to be put into practice. TfL say they are working on the project 'and are in the first stages of development which includes determining the budget required and potential timescales for delivery'.

According to the TfL editorial style guide the various routes are presently to be described in terms of their outer destinations but this leads to names which are far too long for everyday use. For example, the North London Line is to be referred to as 'Overground Richmond/Clapham Junction – Stratford' and the West London line separately as 'Overground Willesden Junction – Clapham Junction'.

One issue will be whether each group of lines will have a unique name (like the District line or the Metropolitan line) or whether each branch will receive a separate name (like the Hammer-smith and City and Circle Lines). It seems that TfL are leaning

towards the latter which would mean, for example, that the East London lines to West Croydon, Crystal Palace, Clapham Junction and New Cross would each have a separate name.

There will be a consultation period for everyone to suggest their own preferred names and there will, no doubt, be a lot of controversy before and after the final decisions are made.

### Counting the cost of falls

30 per cent of people over the age of 65 are liable to suffer a fall whilst walking outdoors each year. This rises to 50 per cent for over 80s. The reason is usually the poor state of the footways often with uneven and broken slabs or exposed tree roots.

This is revealed in the Living Streets report launched on 1st March; Pedestrian Slips, Trips and Falls. Most falls are not recorded but for about 30,000 a year they result in hospital admission. The figures suggest that this is three times the number of people admitted after being hit by vehicles. Local authorities paid out £15 million in 2018 for claims made by people injured in falls due to bad quality pavements. Total cost to the NHS has been estimated at £2.3 billion per year.

A report for the Department for Transport in 2021 estimated that about £1.5 billion is needed to address poor conditions of footways and prevent further deterioration. Dr Rachel Lee, Policy and Research Manager at Living Streets, who wrote the report, contrasted this with the £27 billion the government is proposing to spend on new roads.



graphic: Lois Dodds