

# FFDF News

Freedom for Drivers Foundation Newsletter

Click on any index item below to go directly to the article in a digital edition.

## In this Edition

Using PCNs to Raise Council Funds

Expansion of the ULEZ

Clogging Up London's Road Network

New York and London Congestion Charging

How Many Objections in Lewisham to the LTN?

Petition re Road Safety in Chislehurst

Driver Education Courses

Road Pricing Is Coming

SUVs and Campaign Against

Manchester Campaign Against CAZ and Bromley Air Quality

London Bus Action Plan

Sadiq Khan Wanted Your Views?

How the World Really Works

Improving Our Campaigns

See the last page for publisher and contact information.

## Editorial

This edition of our newsletter covers the minor issues that are affecting many people at present. What it does not cover is the terrible war in Ukraine, the rise of inflation or the impact on living standards.

These are things outside the control of UK politicians as they have arisen from world events. The UK Government can do little about them other than to mitigate their impacts to some extent.

The pursuit of "Net Zero" carbon emissions is contributing to the problems and is widely accepted to be enormously expensive. Regrettably the UK public have not been told how expensive or given a vote on the matter.

With car fuel prices skyrocketing this is going to have a major impact on those who use vehicles for commuting or to perform their work. But Sadiq Khan is continuing to raise the cost of motoring in other ways, exacerbating the problem in London.

This may be our last Newsletter edition before the May Council elections and the party campaigns are now launching.

Will the reaction against the LTNs mean that Labour lose votes in some London Councils? Because it is certainly the case that Labour dominated boroughs have managed to raise the most opposition to them. This is because they have not listened to their electorate and been pursuing dogmatic policies (such as declaring "climate emergencies") rather than looking at the facts.

We may issue some more comments when we have seen the manifestos of the candidates standing for election. But ignore voting on party lines or your past prejudices. Read what they say and what they promise to do before you vote!

That's how democracy should work.

Roger Lawson  
(Editor)



## Quotes of the Month

*"When household bills are rising due to inflation and global supply problems, the Mayor's plan will hit the poorest in our community hardest. It will punish people, small businesses, and charities who cannot afford a new vehicle to raise money for Sadiq Khan's failing administration.".....Gareth Bacon, M.P. on the proposed expansion of the ULEZ—see page 2.*

*"Before Gov. Kathy Hochul and the Legislature smack us with this new tax, they may want to check whether it actually works. Will it deliver on its promise to greatly reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and address transit-revenue gaps? If you ask Londoners, certainly no".....Joe Borelli, New York City Council. See page 4.*





## Using PCNs to Raise Council Funds – It’s Unethical

With local Council budgets under severe strain, they have looked at raising money by maximising PCNs being issued.

With this kind of annual revenue, the financial benefits of continuing with the Dulwich Streetspace scheme must have been part of Southwark’s thinking”.

You can see now why Councils are so keen to install camera-based enforcement systems – they are actually money spinners because the money they generate exceeds the cost of installation and operation.

A recent example is a proposal from Lewisham Council to introduce up to five yellow box junctions in a recent “Budget Reductions Report” to the Sustainable Development Select Committee. The capital cost would be £100,000 but the first-year rate of return is given as £150,000, i.e. there is a payback in under one year. It’s a highly profitable measure! But there is no evidence that such box junctions actually improve the flow of traffic.

These can be issued for breaches of bus lanes, no entry signs in Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs), infringement of yellow box junctions, illegal turns and for a number of other reasons.

Many millions of pounds are now being raised by some London Councils in this way, totally unethically, particularly by those Councils who are prejudiced against motor vehicle use. The number of fines issued by the London boroughs and TfL in 2020-2021 are given in this document:

<https://tinyurl.com/msmwanhx>

You can see that the worse London councils are Croydon, Hackney, Hammersmith & Fulham, Islington, Lewisham and Newham with a large number issued by Transport for London (TfL) also.

In Lewisham for example, after the LTN was introduced in Lee

Green the Council issued 87,443 PCNs for infringement in Dermody Road between August 2020 and January 2022. These would have been picked up by camera enforcement systems. There were also 5,462 issued in Ennersdale Road, 12,002 in Manor Lane and 19,961 in Manor Park.

The campaign group One Dulwich also reported these figures: “More than £6.6 million paid to Southwark in fines. An FOI to Southwark has revealed that 123,853 fines were issued in 2021 to vehicles going through the timed closures on Burbage Road, Turney Road, Dulwich Village and Townley Road, raising a total so far of £6,623,517.

Once all fines are paid (calculating 123,853 PCNs at the lower rate of £65 each), the total will be more than £8 million.



In summary, LTN schemes enforced by cameras are not about reducing vehicle use, improving road safety or improving the environment. They are about generating money in a totally unethical way.

The approach by local councils and the number of PCNs issued very much depends on the policies set by Councillors. Please bear that in mind when voting at the forthcoming May Council elections.

Postscript: readers outside London should be aware that “moving traffic offences” will soon become enforceable outside London so such offences as infringing yellow box junctions will incur fines.



## Expansion of the ULEZ

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has announced that he plans to expand the ULEZ scheme to the whole of London next year.

*Continued on next page.*



### Expansion of the ULEZ (Cont.)

The latest proposal from the Mayor is yet another example of how his policies are all driven by money.

The ULEZ was and is an enormously expensive scheme that is having minimal impact on air pollution levels (these are more influenced by Government taxation policies and the fact that older polluting vehicles do get scrapped sooner or later).

There is no evidence that air pollution significantly affects the life expectancy of Londoners - those who live in the most polluted boroughs often live longer.

His claims about a climate change emergency is just scare-mongering and certainly his policies will have no impact whatsoever on global climate change which if it is affected by anything is by CO2 emissions in China and the USA, not by emissions in London.

The expanded ULEZ will add substantial costs to many Londoners and even encourage them to move elsewhere. London is becoming a city only a place to live in for the young and fit and who are willing to put up with using public transport.

There will be a full public consultation on these proposals in due course but in the meantime there are two petitions to which you can respond:

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8unee4>  
And:

<https://chnng.it/c9xbC5fWTC>

Anyone directly affected by these proposals should write to their Member of Parliament because only the Government can stop Sadiq Khan pursuing these damaging policies. See <https://tinyurl.com/fc8ujvra> for how to contact your MP.

More information from the Freedom for Drivers Foundation on the ULEZ and its costs is here: <https://tinyurl.com/56fzxt3n>

**PLEASE SIGN THE PETITIONS**



**King Street/ Chiswick High Road Cycle Lane Scheme.**

See photograph left of the congestion this has caused.

The cycle lane impedes emergency vehicles,

is dangerous for pedestrians and cyclists, increases congestion and hence pollution, ended the King Street bus lane, and reduces parking space which negatively affects local businesses. The congestion doesn't just stop on King Street. Hammersmith Road, Hammersmith Gyratory, and Fulham Palace Road have all become completely jammed at peak hours which affects the entire Borough.

There is now a petition on Change.org calling for its removal. Please go here to sign: <https://tinyurl.com/7pntjr98>

**London Bridge and Borough High Street.** In the east of London, TfL introduced an experimental scheme on London Bridge and in Borough High Street in Spring 2020 using the Covid epidemic as an excuse.

They are now proposing to extend these schemes for another six months. It effectively closed London Bridge to all traffic except pedestrians, cyclists, motorcyclists, buses and taxis.

See <https://tinyurl.com/2p9y9fek> and <https://tinyurl.com/m6jpa3sm> for details. TfL are now proposing to extend both schemes for a further six months using an experimental traffic order with another consultation exercise.

They claim it has reduced bus journey times but that is hardly surprising when traffic and people in central London have been much reduced by the Covid pandemic.

*Continued on next page.*



### Clogging Up London's Road Network

The road network in central London is being destroyed by the actions of Transport for London (TfL) and local boroughs. When roads are closed or congestion made worse by bus or cycle lanes, then the whole network grinds to a halt. Recent new examples are:



## Clogging Up London's Road Network (Cont.)

This scheme is totally unjustifiable as it removes one of the key London river crossings for most traffic and effectively closes that part of the City to vehicles. You can send comments on the latest decision to: [haveyoursay@tfl.gov.uk](mailto:haveyoursay@tfl.gov.uk)

**Aldwych Scheme.** While I was writing this article I received a telephone call complaining about the revised road layout on Aldwych and Kingsway.

This has substantially increased traffic congestion in the area and many taxi drivers are complaining about it. It's yet another defective traffic scheme introduced by TfL for no clear benefit.



### Slowing Traffic with 20 Limits.

Apart from slowing traffic with more congestion caused by the above schemes, TfL is now proposing to impose lower speed limits on several major roads.

Four 20mph speed limits will be introduced, including the A10 – A503 corridor in Haringey, the A13 Commercial Road in Tower Hamlets, the A23 London Road in Croydon and the A107 corridor

in Hackney. In addition, a 30mph speed limit has been introduced on a section of the A10 Great Cambridge Road in Enfield and Haringey.

These reductions are aimed at cutting casualties as part of its Vision Zero commitment to reduce road danger and enable more walking and cycling in the capital.

The central London Congestion zone had a 20-mph limit imposed in 2020 and the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) will significantly increase speed enforcement by increasing MPS capacity to enforce up to one million offences by 2024/25, introducing new technology to improve effectiveness of enforcement and rolling out new powers to Police Community Support Officers so that they can stop speeding vehicles and take enforcement action against drivers.



Comment: This is of course an example of how the MPS under Cressida Dick has lost track of its priorities. Instead of cutting knife crime and keeping the roads open the MPS prefers instead to spend money on speed limit enforcement.

This is yet more harassment of drivers which will have little impact on road casualties. Vision Zero is failing to achieve its objectives in cutting accidents because reducing speed limits alone by just putting up signs does not have any impact as is clear from studies published by the DfT. To cut accidents roads need to be re-engineered and money spent on driver education. Central London is becoming a "no go" area for private car drivers and making life very difficult for taxi/PHV and delivery vehicle drivers. This is simply encouraging businesses and retailers to move out and will impoverish London in due course.



spells out why it should not happen in an article which is headlined "Congestion pricing is coming to NYC — though London shows it's a disaster".

This is some of what the article, written by Joe Borelli, minority leader of the New York City Council, says:

## New York and London Congestion Charging

New York has been considering a congestion charge for some years, but it has always been opposed by surrounding boroughs. A good article in the New York Times (see link below),

"Before Gov. Kathy Hochul and the Legislature smack us with this new tax, they may want to check whether it actually works.

Will it deliver on its promise to greatly reduce traffic congestion, improve air quality and address transit-revenue gaps?

If you ask Londoners, certainly not.

*Continued on next page.*



## Congestion Charging (Cont.)

The city's traffic scheme has not lived up to the hype, and now London is not only the most congested city in the United Kingdom, it is the most congested city in the world.

In 2021, London drivers lost an average of 148 hours to congestion, costing \$1,211 per driver, as it topped the most recent Global Traffic Scorecard compiled by INRIX, a leading transportation-analytics firm. (If you're wondering, New York City is only the fifth-most congested city, just below Moscow.)

This study isn't an outlier. Pre-COVID London was ranked among the worst traffic cities by the TomTom Traffic Index, "out-trafficking" crowded cities like Shenzhen and Kuala Lumpur. An earlier 2019 Inrix traffic analysis

All this should sound eerily familiar to outer-borough New Yorkers who at present pay for the privilege of driving to posh Manhattan while their own streets remain choked in transit deserts.

The Metropolitan Transportation Authority already runs its own version of congestion pricing, called MTA Bridges and Tunnels. Under this scheme, the state chooses which bridges and tunnels motorists must pay to cross to subsidize the public transportation of others. Just like London, a series of anti-car progressive lefties have pushed increases of these fees to satisfy MTA budget needs. In the past 30 years, those tolls have increased more than 375%. Even Bidenflation can't keep up.

further confirms London has more congestion than New York. Imagine that — the Empire State, the Big Apple taking their cue from a city whose solution is worse than our problem. Bollocks!

Despite London's ballyhooed congestion charge, it's planning a massive restructuring. The CO2 from all the idling cars clogging the capital have spurred Mayor Sadiq Khan to propose scrapping the current £15 (\$20) fee system altogether in favor of an entirely new scheme in which all London drivers would incur an initial surcharge and pay an existing "Ultra Low Emission Zone" fee, plus pay-per-mile charges as needed.

Nothing screams "Success!" or "Replicate me!" like London's leadership proposing a start-from-scratch overhaul because the system failed to meet its goals.

Essentially, London may soon be charging motorists as if they

We don't need to know how a new driving tax will affect our lives — we are already living it. London's congestion-pricing failure should serve as a cautionary tale. But our "leadership" in Albany is not going to read it let alone heed its warnings.

Instead, after New York City's congestion plan creates more traffic, fails to reduce emissions and produces far less revenue than expected, Hochul & Co. are likely to arrive at the same conclusion as their London counterparts: charge more money, impose higher fees and expand the catchment area.

In the end, all roads lead to revenue".

**Editor's Comment:** Mr Borelli is right, the London Congestion Charge (a.k.a. tax) has never

were taxi passengers — except they will be driving themselves in their own cars, along streets their tax money already pays for. We could chuckle about the absurdity of all this if only Democrats like President Joe Biden were not already pushing our own mileage-tax proposals here in the States.

The real reason London leaders are planning a vastly expanded tax structure on all vehicles may be far more cynical than saving the planet: The city desperately needs more revenue. Despite all the fees and fines it has collected since congestion pricing went into effect, the city's public transit and roadway agency, Transport for London (TfL), is going broke.

As it stands, despite receiving a massive COVID bailout from the national government, TfL needs another \$1.3 billion annually to operate in the black. Even before the pandemic, TfL's budget shortfalls and cost overruns were more consistent than its bus schedule.

worked and is primarily a revenue raising measure. It should be scrapped! And New Yorkers should not follow London's example.

New York Times Article: <https://tinyurl.com/47wvb8yz>

### Follow us on Twitter

To get the latest news and comment on traffic and transport issues in London and the UK, you can follow us on Twitter.

Our Twitter handle is **@Drivers\_London**

Any new FFDF blog posts are notified by Twitter and you can of course respond with your own comments.



Neighbourhood (LTN) schemes in Lewisham. Their response after a long delay was that they did not have that information.

We appealed to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO) and have received a final decision. The ICO have concluded that the Council breached regulations 5(2) and 14(1)

of the EIR by failing to respond within 20 working days and failing to advise that it was relying on regulation 12(4)(b). But they agreed that it was too burdensome a request.

The FOI Act can be a useful piece of legislation but not when Councils deliberately frustrate or delay answering reasonable questions.

It's taken so long (eighteen months) to get to this point that the information requested is now

somewhat irrelevant so we won't be pursuing a further appeal. But one item of data obtained as a result was that Louise McBride (Head of Highways and Transport at the Council) alone received 1,040 emails on the subject.

That contradicted a minute of a Council Meeting on the 25th January 2022 where it was stated that Cabinet Member Patrick Codd reported that the Council received approximately 150 emails about the experimental introduction of the LTNs.

That was clearly inaccurate and Councillor Codd is arranging for the minute to be corrected. These events show how Lewisham Council is incompetent in many ways. They failed to record objections in any useful way despite the Lee Green LTN being an "experimental" scheme.



## How Many Objections in Lewisham to the LTN?

Back in November 2020 we submitted a request under the Freedom of Information Act (FOI) to obtain the number of objections received by the Council or Councillors to the Low Traffic

We have requested that they at least count the objections to the Permanent LTN properly.

If you have not yet sent in objections to the Lewisham and Lee Green LTN, there is a blog post that explains how to do so and a template letter you can use. See <https://tinyurl.com/33emrvyc>

You might find it useful when objecting to other LTNs.

## Petition re Road Safety in Chislehurst

In the London Borough of Bromley a new political party called "Chislehurst Matters" has been formed to fight the council elections in May. A few local activists seem dissatisfied with the efforts of their current



Conservative councillors. Specifically they have concerns about actions on road safety and particularly the lack of a pedestrian phase at the Chislehurst War Memorial junction (photo above).

On 28/2/2022 the council considered a petition signed by more than 4,000 people and submitted by a group called "Safe Cross-

ings for Chislehurst". Who are they?

Unlike the leaders of Chislehurst Matters they seem to prefer to remain anonymous although Chris Wells was promoting a previous petition on the same subject.

*Continued on next page.*



## Petition (Cont.)

You can read the latest petition and the Council's response here: <https://tinyurl.com/26cuzhhe>. Councillors voted to reject the petition.

The council's response was surely eminently reasonable. Councillor Huntington-Thresher has previously said this on this issue: "Road Safety remains an ever present high priority, with this particular junction being carefully considered for a controlled crossing point over the years. The reality is that the installation of a pedestrian phase without a redesign of the junction would undoubtedly increase congestion, not just at the junction itself but also in the surrounding local roads, actually and ironically, causing an even bigger road safety issue".

Your editor's comments to Chislehurst Matters were:

Common Road) where a restructuring of the roads over the Common is the sole way of fixing the problem. But regrettably there is an attitude of opposition to any changes in the minds of many Chislehurst residents. It might help to have more active councillors on other topics but when it comes to road safety issues I fear more anger and less science is not the solution. <End Letter>

Summary: It is most disappointing that this small group of activists are persisting with stirring up public concerns about this issue and putting forward simplistic solutions that might make overall road safety worse. They appear to know little about road safety and how best to examine and tackle the issues. In effect they are a bunch of amateurs with a bee in their bonnet about a single issue

I welcome the formation of Chislehurst Matters to fight the forthcoming council elections as it's always good to have more choices in whom one can vote for. But I have some concerns about some of the content of the platform you are adopting. For example you highlight road safety and particularly the controversial issue of the War Memorial junction crossing.

You don't seem to be aware that Bromley has an exemplary record on improving road safety and in general has been following rational policies since the Conservatives took over control of the Council many years ago. I recall what it was like before then and it was certainly greatly improved partly by not wasting money on political dogma but actually looking at the available evidence. I have been involved in road safety issues in many London boroughs, particularly Croydon and Lewisham for example, where the result of their

without looking at the wider environment.

I recommend that they be ignored as I find the Council's response both rational and reasonable.

Roger Lawson



## Driver Education Courses

policies has been a worse road safety record than Bromley.

As regards the War Memorial junction, my views on this issue were spelled out in a blog post in 2019. My views have not changed since, and there is no simple solution.

This is a complex issue but I don't think Chislehurst councillors or Council staff have been thwarting safety improvements. If anyone is to blame it is the attitude of the Common Trustees who have blocked any changes to improve that junction and the Chislehurst Society has not been helpful either. There is also the issue of where the required funding for any scheme would come from which is subject to the whims of TfL.

That also applies to the accidents that regularly take place at the white spot roundabout in the centre of Chislehurst Commons (on Centre



The number of speed cameras in the UK has been steadily rising and these are being financed by collecting money from drivers who do education courses such as "Speed Awareness" courses.

In 2021 the number of drivers who took such courses to avoid fines and penalty points was 1.5 million. Apart from a drop in 2020 probably due to less driving in the pandemic this is similar to previous years so it appears that the scheme has had no impact on the level of offences.

Likewise the impact on road casualties which was a justification for introducing speed cameras and associated education courses is not at all clear with road fatalities plateauing in the ten years prior to 2020.

Continued on next page.

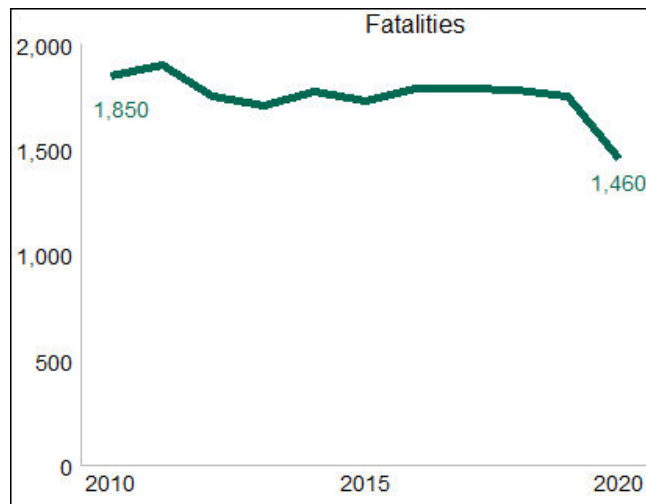


## Driver Education Courses (Cont.)

See the chart to the right from DfT statistics.

The Government (DfT) commissioned a study into the effectiveness of speed awareness courses which reported in May 2018. This is the key statement in the Executive Summary: "this study did not find that participation in NSAC [National Speed Awareness Courses] had a statistically significant effect on the number or severity of injury collisions".

In reality speed cameras and the operation of education courses have just turned into a financial industry for the benefit of course



It is interesting that in the USA there is still strong opposition to the use of speed cameras although the new Biden administration is supporting them. In fact cameras are illegal in many US states at present and the National Motoring Association (NMA) is strongly opposed to them. See link to MSN article below. To

quote from it: "New Jersey, State Senator Declan O'Scanlon told DailyMail.com that these are upsetting developments. Automated enforcement has proven to make no one any safer... but everyone (except the corrupt companies operating the systems) poorer,"



O'Scanlon, a Republican, said Sunday. "It amounts to government sanctioned theft. Thank God New Jersey had the good sense to ban the use of automated enforcement early on...and then win a David vs Goliath battle to terminate our failed red light camera experiment. Any elected official that supports these systems is supporting screwing every one of his/her constituents that drives a car". That's the view of many people in the UK also.

The USA would be very unwise to follow the path chosen in the UK where the promotion of speed cameras as a way to improve road safety has been shown to be a mistake.

MSN Article on Speed Cameras in the USA:  
<https://tinyurl.com/mrxyjan7>



## Road Pricing Is Coming

Road pricing has proved politically unacceptable to date. But a report from the House of Commons Transport Committee recently published makes it very clear that it needs to happen and very soon (see link below).

The problem is that VED and fuel duty generate 4% of overall tax receipts. But as people switch to electric vehicles almost all of that will be lost by 2040. In addition traffic congestion might become worse as the cost of journeys will be reduced when nobody is paying for fuel.

The Transport Committee rightly points out that the plethora of local schemes that are now appearing such as the London Congestion Charge/ ULEZ taxes and CAZ schemes in other cities mean too much complexity is the result. There needs to be a single unified national scheme.

How to provide that? Telematics is the answer they suggest when a black box in every vehicle could track usage and enable charging based on distance travelled, roads used, vehicle type used, etc. It could be an ideal solution in essence to meet several policy objectives and yet be user friendly in operation.

The Committee suggests that whatever options are chosen to replace fuel duty should be "revenue neutral" and not cause drivers as a whole to pay more than they do currently.

This is quite essential as that was one of the major objections to road pricing in the past. It could enable the Government to raise taxes on motoring when motorists already pay over £50 billion in taxes (only a very small fraction of the money raised is spent on improving our roads - about £7bn).

*Continued on next page.*





## Road Pricing (Cont.)

The Committee also say that the situation is urgent and a recommendation for a road pricing solution needs to be developed by the end of 2022. The only obvious omission from the Report is the lack of consideration of the cost of a national road pricing scheme.

*Editor's Comment:* the Committee's Report is certainly worth reading. I do not see any viable alternative to their proposals. No doubt there will be opposition from some motoring groups who like to live in the past but they won't have any other practical solutions to put forward.

As the Report says: "The Government must start an honest conversation with the public on the funding implications for road development and maintenance and for other essential public services of decreased revenue

from vehicle excise duty and fuel duty". I agree but readers please let me have your own comments - but do read the Committee's Report first.

Roger Lawson

Transport Committee Report: <https://tinyurl.com/4pcsaxrc>



This is undoubtedly a criminal act which should be condemned.

But it's worth saying that SUVs are an irrational choice of vehicle except for the very few who have a very large family or need to transport a lot of goods.

An SUV typically is shaped like a brick and has a large frontal area. Therefore it will have higher wind resistance and fuel consumption than a smaller vehicle. If you want a luxury vehicle with plenty of space inside you don't need to buy an SUV. Even electric SUVs will have a reduced range over comparable smaller vehicles.

So my view is that SUVs should be avoided and they have certainly contributed to higher overall air pollution in the last few years. But attacking the vehicles or their owners is wrong.

Roger Lawson



## SUVs and Campaign Against

You have probably seen in the news a campaign against SUVs with tyres being let down.

## Manchester Campaign Against CAZ and Bromley Air Quality

While Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, plans to expand his ULEZ scheme, in Manchester there has been a very effective campaign against their proposed CAZ scheme. Mayor Andy Burnham is now back-tracking on the proposals.

Daily charges for the most polluting vehicles that don't meet emission standards – HGVs, buses, non-Greater Manchester licensed taxis and Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) – had been due

to begin on 30 May 2022 but will now not go ahead.

The withdrawn legal direction would have led to charges for non-compliant vans, Greater Manchester-licensed taxis and private hire vehicles (PHVs) from June 2023.

Private cars, motorcycles and mopeds were exempt. Concerns about financial hardship for local people and the availability of compliant vehicles led the Mayor of Greater Manchester and Greater Manchester local authority leaders to ask government to lift its legal direction. Greater Manchester's 10 local authorities have until 1 July 2022 to work



with government to develop a new plan that will clean up the air while protecting livelihoods.

The campaign against the Manchester CAZ has 90,000 supporters under the banner Rethink GM. Go here for more information: [www.rethinkgm.co.uk](http://www.rethinkgm.co.uk) and to register support. *Continued on next page.*



## Manchester and Bromley (Cont.)

On the home page click "Forums" then "Register" with just your name and email. The web site also provides a link to an active Facebook page.

Meanwhile the London Borough of Bromley have shown that it is not necessary to impose expensive ULEZ or CAZ schemes to clean up the air (most of that borough is outside the London ULEZ scheme). A press release from Bromley reports that updated data from the London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory shows that between 2016 and 2019 there was a 23% decline in NO2 across the borough, a 19% decline in PM2.5 and a 28% decline in PM10 particulates.

Bromley claims to now be the "cleanest and greenest borough in London".

For more details see Bromley press release here: <https://tinyurl.com/t64prmn9>

Comment: Bromley has of course ignored demands for LTNs and road closures and is keen to keep traffic moving. But they have pursued positive initiatives such as electric bus trials. Unlike many Labour controlled boroughs in London they have taken a more empirical and less dogmatic approach to the air quality issue. Readers are reminded that the London ULEZ did little to contribute to improvements in air quality so why is the Mayor wanting to expand it? It will cost a great deal to install hundreds of new cameras to expand the zone and high operating costs, apart from the impact on residents who will need to buy new vehicles or pay £12.50 per day. Although the Mayor says he has abandoned the idea of a boundary charge for people driving into London from outside, the extra cameras will make it very easy to introduce such a scheme!



## London Bus Action Plan Published

Transport for London (TfL) have published the Mayor's Bus Action Plan – see link below for the full document.



This document promotes bus travel as an "active travel" mode. But what is "active" about sitting on a bus?

The plan is full of such sophistry. Consider the following statement in it: "Meanwhile, climate change is a real and present emergency, as demonstrated by recent flooding in London and across Europe, and increasing numbers of wildfires in Europe, the Middle East, north Africa, North America and Australia. This is why the Mayor of London has made clear his ambition for London to be a world leader in tackling the twin dangers of air pollution and the climate emergency, and has brought forward the 2050 target for London to be a net zero carbon city to 2030".

There is no evidence that recent storms and flooding are other

than random events. Promoting the use of buses certainly won't help when most of them are still diesel powered.

The big problems with London buses are well known. Bus journey times have slowed thus putting people off using them and the pandemic has contributed to lower usage. More cycle lanes have obstructed buses and diversion of traffic off minor roads in LTNs to major roads has increased congestion. Meanwhile the cost of bus journeys has increased.

In outer London few people want to wait in the rain for the next bus and take circuitous routes to destinations when they can jump in their own private car or call a taxi to do a door-to-door trip in a quicker time.

But the report does say that they can reduce carbon emissions "By accelerating the delivery of a zero-emission bus fleet to 2030".

Is that a commitment to actually deliver a zero emission bus fleet by 2030. No it's not. It's the typical weasel words of politicians.

The report says "In contrast, a modern bus service that provides an inclusive customer experience". What does that mean? It does not explain.

It also says: "A well-connected bus network will enable car-free lifestyles by providing a high-quality, attractive mode of transport to connect new developments to shops, stations and other destinations".

Continued on next page.



## London Bus Action Plan (Cont.)

But buses cannot provide for all the needs and trips that people take via car, particularly if you wish to travel outside London or other than in and out of the centre.

How do they propose to speed up bus journey times? By introducing road user charging that will deter other vehicles from using the roads you have paid for. And by putting in more bus lanes and bus plus cycle only streets.

There is one big omission from this report. Namely any consideration of the financial position of London buses. The fact they get massively subsidised out of taxation is not even mentioned. If bus users had to pay the real cost of their journeys they would choose another travel mode.

want in an already congested city.

In other words, it was a typical biased survey from the Mayor that asked both the wrong questions and asked leading questions.

Some of the later survey questions were more innocuous but missed the opportunity to really find out what Londoners want.

The survey was only available for 3 weeks. Why was it closed prematurely? Perhaps the Mayor was not getting the answers he wanted.

Roger Lawson



In summary this report contains some useful facts but it's full of management speak and is way too long. It ignores the basic problem that buses can only meet a minority of the desires and needs of Londoners for transport.

Bus Action Plan:  
<https://tinyurl.com/3rd2h88s>

## Sadiq Khan Wanted Your Views?

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, wanted your views on the future of London. He issued a survey which was available on the Talk London platform which asked a number of questions and also allowed you to post some general comments.

The survey started out by asking you to pick your top three choices from the following

changes you would like to see in the next ten years:

Safer streets for walking and cycling; Cleaner streets; "Improved parks and green spaces; More attractive outdoor public spaces; More trees and greenery outside of parks; More workplaces; Better public transport; More housing; More attractive high streets and town centres; More physically accessible public spaces".

This list does not include my top choices at all which would be: "1) Better private transport (i.e. more road space and less congestion, with fewer closed roads, bus lanes and cycle lanes); 2) Fewer people and less encouragement to move into London to reduce the stress on housing provision and transport provision; and 3) Lower taxes such as the ULEZ, Congestion Charge and Mayor's Council Tax Precept.

I might vote for more trees and greenery but more housing we do not



## How the World Really Works – Book Review

It is important for everyone to understand what factors are driving the world's economies. This is particularly so when there are concerns about global warming and the alleged degradation of the environment as the world's population continues to increase.

A good primer on this subject is a recently published book by Prof. Vaclav Smil entitled "How the World Really Works". The author covers wide ranging topics from energy supply to food supply in a very analytic way based on established facts rather than polemics which he criticises as

being far too common in the modern world.

His chapter on food production is particularly interesting and he shows how we now manage to feed 8 billion people reasonably well which would have been inconceivable 100 years ago.

How do we do it? By using energy supplied mostly from fossil fuels to create fertilizers and by manufacturing farm machinery and road/rail/shipping transport to distribute the products efficiently.

The author points out that if we reverted to solely "organic" farming methods we would be lucky to feed half the world's population.

Continued on next page.





### Book Review (Cont.)

The author covers the supply of key products such as steel, plastics and cement which are essential for our modern standard of living and how they are not only energy intensive in production but that there are few alternatives. He clearly supports the view that the climate is being affected by man's activities but points out that the changing of energy production, food production and the production of key products cannot be easily achieved. Certainly it will be difficult to achieve that in the timescales demanded by European politicians when the major carbon emitters of China, India, USA, and Russia are moving so slowly.

Meanwhile any forecasts of the use of oil declining or reserves running out should be treated with scepticism as the price of oil reaches a 7 year high of \$95 per

For example, the use of coal in energy generation can be much reduced, and oil/gas also to some extent. Nuclear fission is a good source of clean energy and fission is a possibility even if he was not aware of the latest announcements on the latter. But it is inconceivable that there will be short-term revolutions in energy supply.

### Follow the Blog

The FFDF has a blog where many of the articles herein first appeared. It is present here: <https://freedomfordrivers.blog/>  
To get the latest news as it appears, follow the blog. Enter your email address at the foot of any recent blog post to be notified of new posts as they appear.

barrel. No doubt there will be the usual gripes by motorists who drive petrol/diesel vehicles over the price of fuel and the claimed excess profits being made by oil companies, which in my view are a persistent myth. If you look at the profits of companies such as BP, which it has been suggested should be subject to a "windfall tax", they are not particularly great if averaged over the last 20 years. In fact returns on capital invested are worse than for many other public companies.

The author looks at the risks in the future for the world, many of which are uncertain. He mentions the risk of a big "Carrington event" - a geomagnetic storm occurring today would cause widespread electrical disruptions, blackouts, and damage due to extended outages of the electrical grid. If that is not enough to scare you he suggests that another pandemic similar to Covid-19 is very likely as such epidemics have happened about every 20 years in the past and might be more virulent in future.

Altogether the book is worth reading just to get an understanding of how the world currently works – as the book's title suggests.

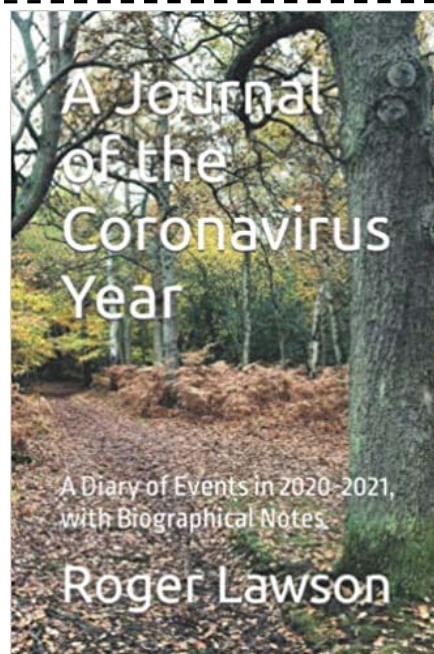
Incidentally some of the events covered in How the World Really Works are also discussed in my own recently published book entitled "**A Journal of the Coronavirus Year**" which covers not just the recent pandemic but the changes that have happened in the last 75 years of my lifetime including some of the vehicles I have owned. It's now available from Amazon – see <https://tinyurl.com/bdefu3xx> for more information (cover image to the right).

Roger Lawson

But planning for such events, which were historically well known, was minimal and continues to be so.

He does not propose solutions to global warming other than that we do have many tools to enable us to adapt and cope with the issue. For example, farming could be made more efficient and wasted food reduced. Electrification of vehicles might help in a minor way and he is particularly critical of the increase in the use of SUVs in the last 20 years which has been particularly damaging (I cannot but agree with him on that point – if folks are concerned about the high price of fuel they should purchase more economic vehicles and particularly avoid SUVs).

But this is not a book containing simple remedies to the world's problems. It is more one that gives you an understanding of how we got to where we are now and where we might be going.



# Improving Our Campaigns

The Freedom for Drivers Foundation has been operating in one form or another for many years. During that period the attacks on the use of private cars have steadily increased. The Covid pandemic has been used to accelerate the trend to close roads, reduce road space and introduce more restrictions on your freedom of movement. This has to be opposed!

That's not just the case in London which was the initial focus of our activities but across the country more recently.

We now need to improve our communications to supporters and the wider public. A number of steps are proposed:

We are improving our social media presence. We already have an active blog which gives you the latest news which might

affect you as a driver and which is here:

<https://freedomfordrivers.blog/> .

You can now register to "follow" that blog and receive an email of new updates by entering your email address in the box at the foot of any of the recent blog posts.

We also have an active Twitter account (see @Drivers\_London ) where news and comments are posted.

If you don't wish to see news almost every day by using the above, then we have a condensed newsletter which is issued every couple of months and which you are reading now.

It is sent out by email as a pdf document for easy reading. You can register to receive it on this web page:

<https://tinyurl.com/yckkuf5c>

We also have a Facebook page which is focused on the London Mayor's Transport Strategy – see

<https://tinyurl.com/2p8bxvpf>

It is proposed to expand our coverage to other regions by setting up other Facebook pages.

The Freedom for Drivers Foundation web site was originally developed many years ago and more recently has been maintained using the WebPlus software. See web site home page image below.

The WebPlus software is no longer supported by the supplier and the web site is not easy to use on a mobile device. The site needs redeveloping in a new software platform such as Wix.

All of the above, particularly the redevelopment of the web site, is beyond the personal capabilities of your editor as I simply do not have the time to do it.

In essence we need some funding to do that and also to expand our marketing so as to spread awareness of our organisation.



In summary this is a call for more funding to enable this organisation to improve on what we have been doing and expand our contact base. We already have several thousand email contacts, mainly in the London area. But we need to reach tens of thousands across the whole country to have an effective voice to counter those who oppose the use of private cars.

This requires money so please donate as much as you can by going to this web page: <https://tinyurl.com/99uft4cu>

Don't delay – help me to grow the organisation by donating! But also sign up to receive our newsletters and to follow our blog if you are not already doing so.

Roger Lawson





### Registering to Receive This Newsletter

This newsletter is free of charge and is sent approximately bi-monthly to anyone who cares to request a copy. It is sent via email (as a link to a web page from which you can download it). To register for a free copy simply go to this web page: <http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/register.htm> and fill out the form to be added to our mailing list.

### Address Changes

Don't forget to notify us of any change of email address. You may otherwise miss out on future copies of this newsletter without noticing that they are no longer being delivered.

### About the Freedom for Drivers Foundation (FFDF)

The Freedom for Drivers Foundation (FFDF) is an independent organisation which represents the interests of private motorists in the United Kingdom. We campaign to protect the rights of individual road users and believe that road transport is a beneficial and essential element in the UK transport infrastructure. We oppose excessive taxation of motorists and are against road tolls. We also campaign for more enlightened road safety policies. More information on the FFDF is available from our web site at [www.freedomfordrivers.org](http://www.freedomfordrivers.org)

### Contact and Publisher Information

This Newsletter is published by the Freedom for Drivers Foundation, PO Box 62, Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5YB and is distributed free of charge to registered supporters and to anyone else who has an interest in traffic and transport issues. All material contained herein is Copyright of the FFDF or of the respective authors and may only be reproduced with permission. Any opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author of the article or that of the Editor which do not necessarily represent the official policies of the FFDF.

The FFDF also publishes a blog which can be found here: <https://freedomfordrivers.blog/> or you can follow us on Twitter here: [https://twitter.com/Drivers\\_London](https://twitter.com/Drivers_London)

FFDF Director and Newsletter Editor: Roger Lawson (Tel: 020-8295-0378). Use the web site Contact Page here to contact: [www.freedomfordrivers.org/Contact.htm](http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/Contact.htm) . The FFDF would be happy to advise or assist anyone who is concerned about any traffic, transport or road safety issues in London or elsewhere in the UK. Complimentary subscriptions to this newsletter are available on request to anyone with an interest in transport matters. Our internet web address is: [www.freedomfordrivers.org](http://www.freedomfordrivers.org) . This newsletter is supplied in electronic form which can be displayed and printed via the free Adobe Acrobat Reader. Past copies of our newsletters can be obtained from the [www.freedomfordrivers.org](http://www.freedomfordrivers.org) web site or by contacting the publisher.

