

FFDF News

Freedom for Drivers Foundation Newsletter

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Editorial

This edition contains several articles on how central Government and local Councils are going to revolutionise our world—see the articles on decarbonising transport and the “Gear Change” report. This is justified on the need to defeat climate change by reducing carbon emissions.

But has the Government ever consulted people on this, or justified such measures that will put us back into the Victorian age so far as transport is concerned? No they have not. And neither have they done any proper costing or provided a cost/benefit analysis to justify the race for net zero by 2050.

The Conservative Government is going to lose a lot of votes when the public realises just how much it is going to cost them and how it will affect their lifestyles. The latest announcements on gas and electricity prices is just the start of the additional costs that are being imposed on the public from the decarbonisation of energy provision.

Boris Johnson is leading the charge on these policies and he remains relatively popular, but it will not last. It just needs a viable alternative candidate to come forward to lead his party to introduce more rational agendas.

Roger Lawson
(Editor)



Quotes of the Month—These are just a few of the comments received in our Lewisham LTN survey (see article on page 12):

“Crazy, mad. We have 2 kids and we use Dermody Road to get to Lidl for food shopping for the family and now I have to travel all around Lewisham. My 5 minutes journey is now 30 minutes as traffic around Lewisham and behind the shopping centre is MAD”.

“The closures are severely restricting the free flow of traffic in all directions, causing unnecessary pollution at slow moving pinch-points”.

“Traffic in Harland Road has increased in rush hour, giving us excess noise and pollution. Our journeys to Sainsburys and Greenwich Park are significantly longer. Stuck in traffic. Very few roads are seeing the benefit but a lot of roads are suffering. You have created many HTNs (Higher traffic Neighbourhoods). No logic here. It simply isn't fair.”

“These plans are badly thought out, do not achieve the council's stated intentions (lowering pollution) and nor do they create routes which encourage either cycling or walking. The sole outcome to date has been large increases in journey times, more idling cars in long traffic queues and many disgruntled drivers and passengers”



Government Powers Ahead with Decarbonising Transport

A recent announcement from the Government spells out the world's first "greenprint" for decarbonising all modes of domestic transport by 2050.

Plans include a ban on all new "polluting" road vehicles by 2040 and net zero aviation emissions by 2050. The former includes the phasing out of all petrol and diesel HGVs by 2040 – subject to consultation. Consultation will be very important because the practicality of HGVs that need to go long distances without repeated refuelling is important economically. LGVs can probably be electrified but HGVs need to use alternative fuels.



The 2050 commitment applies to aviation emissions and a consultation on that is also launched under the "Jet Zero" banner. It is clear that new technologies and aviation fuels need to be developed to achieve a major reduction in aviation emissions.

Whether such changes to reach zero emissions are achievable is not at all clear and the cost, which might be very considerable, is not given.

Similarly the costs of electrification of all rail transport is likely to be



enormous as the UK lags far behind other European countries in that regard. Only about 50% of the UK rail network is currently electrified.

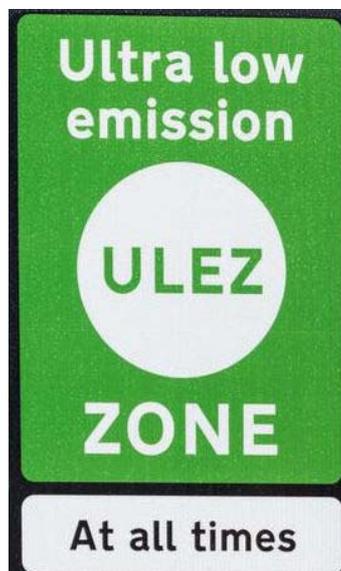
The Daily Telegraph has speculated on a new system of road pricing to replace the £30 billion currently raised through taxes on petrol and diesel. But the latest Government announcement leaves out any mention of how that issue is to be tackled.

As with all good political missives, the Government document contains lots of fine words about how the environment will be improved while not inhibiting us from travelling when or where we want (for example, taking holiday flights). It's a policy statement in essence that leaves out all the detail of how this nirvana is to be achieved and at what cost. It ignores a lot of the practical difficulties.

But it's worth reading to get an impression of what might happen in the next few years.

Government GreenPrint Paper:
<https://tinyurl.com/8ymtap38>

Telegraph Article on "Road Toll Confusion":
<https://tinyurl.com/edxxh4rp>



Mayor Raking it in from ULEZ Charges

The "This is Money" web site have published a very good article on how the ULEZ charge is generating large amounts of tax money for the Mayor and TfL in London. It reports, based on data obtained by the AA, that the Mayor raked in £107 million in the first year of the ULEZ. See link below for the article.

We pointed out when the ULEZ charge was first proposed that this was about raising money for TfL to plug a big hole in their budgets. It was not primarily about improving the health of Londoners as claimed because any cost/benefit analysis indicates it is very poor value for money.

Continued on next page.



ULEZ Charges (Cont.)

See Reference 2 below for links to past articles.

With the ULEZ expanding in October and likely to affect another 300,000 drivers of older vehicles, the tax income raised will grow exponentially.

This is basically an attack on car drivers, particularly those who cannot afford to buy a new car, such as the elderly or poor.

Implementing the expanded ULEZ will cost £130 million in capital expenditure and by 2030 the expected benefit in reduced emissions is forecast to be zero as the vehicle fleet changes. But will the taxes ever be removed? We doubt it.

In reality the Mayor will plead poverty as he regularly does and the ULEZ and Congestion Charges will increase.

Reference 1: This is Money article:
<https://tinyurl.com/3s5j2ste>

Reference 2: FFDF Articles on the ULEZ:
<https://tinyurl.com/y82zvh5>



ULEZ Costs Rise Again

Sadiq Khan has disclosed in his latest answers to questions in the London Assembly that the cost of implementing the expanded Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) will now be £130 million. This is to cover the cost of an extra 750 cameras to cover the expanded area to the North/South Circular.

The original estimated cost was only £38.4 million, subsequently rising to £120 million and now £130 million. It never made economic sense in terms of the cost/benefit ratio and is a typical example of TfL and the Mayor being financially incompetent. In fact TfL concealed the original costs and likely income when the project was first proposed.



See this web page for the history of what happened and why it never made sense:

<https://tinyurl.com/y82zvh5>

In reality it is imposing enormous costs on Londoners for minimal benefit.

Air Pollution Data in London Does Not Support Mayor's Claims

Yet again the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has used school children to promote his policies to expand the ULEZ in a photo-shoot. He said "In central London, the world-leading Ultra Low Emission Zone has already helped cut toxic roadside nitrogen dioxide pollution by nearly half and led to reductions that are

five times greater than the national average".

But in fact a recently published report by the London Borough of Lewisham shows that air pollution has fallen dramatically in recent years even in outer London boroughs. This is clearly the result of changes to vehicles and in 2020 by Covid lockdowns reducing traffic.

This is what we have said to supporters of our campaign against the Lewisham LTNs:

There is major public concern on the impact of the road closures in the LTN on air pollution because they have diverted traffic onto surrounding roads. Such roads as Burnt Ash Road, Lee High Road, Lee Road, the South Circular and others are residential roads and there are reports of increased air pollution.

A useful report (at least to some extent) has just been published by Lewisham Council. It contains

their "Air Quality Annual Status Report for 2020" (available from this page:
<https://tinyurl.com/pmhsu6up>).

The report contains measurements of nitrogen dioxide (NO2) and particulates (PM2.5) over the last few years up to the end of 2020 from about 50 sites across the borough. An additional 51 sites were added in September 2020, many located within the LTN such as on Manor Lane and Burnt Ash Road, but that was of course after the Lee Green road closures were instituted. It is therefore impossible to see the impact of the road closures as no proper "before and after data" has been collected and the Covid lock-down measures will also have complicated any analysis.

The biggest reduction occurred in the last two years but that might be due to reduced traffic volumes.

Continued on next page.

Air Pollution (Cont.)

However the data shows that there have been consistent falls in pollution since 2014 (an average decrease of 38% for the seven year period). The levels reported are now all within the National Air Quality Standards, although some people argue that those standards should be raised.

It is no doubt the case that the falls in air pollution levels that have taken place prior to 2020 and continued in that year have occurred due to cleaner vehicles.

Older vehicles have been scrapped and standards for new vehicles have been raised by Government regulation – for example by the move to Euro 6 standards.

The borough supports the Mayor of London’s commitment to reduce the PM2.5 limit but as the report says “a large percentage of PM2.5 in London comes from regional and other transboundary (non-UK) sources”. It is clear that action on particulates, which is probably more important in health terms than NO2, needs to be taken at a national or international level.

In other words, local LTNs in Lewisham or other boroughs are not going to have a significant impact on background levels of air pollution.

Subsidies to Electric Vehicles – Are They Justified?



There was a good article in the Investors Chronicle recently covering the subsidies to electric vehicle manufacturers from the Government, particularly to Tesla (photo of Model 3 above)..

In 2020 the Department of Transport paid out at least £61.5 million lowering the price of new Tesla vehicles to the purchasers. Since 2011 the government has spent at least £1.1 billion by providing up to £2,500 per vehicle to manufacturers of electric cars. Tesla has been the biggest recipient of this largesse.



But with the price cap on which vehicles qualify being reduced to £35,000 when the cheapest Tesla is the Model 3 from about £40,000, this subsidy is likely to disappear unless Tesla reduce their prices which they seem unlikely to do.

Are such subsidies justifiable? Effectively the Government is using the taxes you pay to subsidise the purchase of expensive vehicles which only wealthier people can afford to buy. Introducing a lower price cap certainly makes sense, but it is surely questionable whether such subsidies should be paid at all when the Government is so short of money as a result of the Covid epidemic.

The Cause of London’s Problems

We all know that London has major problems with traffic congestion, localised air pollution and housing shortages. These are all symptoms of a population that has been growing rapidly and is now way too large for the supporting infrastructure.

One of the causes of the rapid increase in the population is immigration into London from Europe. The Daily Telegraph have published an article that spells out the figures after an analysis of applications under the EU Settlement Scheme (EUSS) that allows EU citizens permanent residence in the country. The figures they report are not just unexpectedly high, they are truly astonishing.

The article (see reference below), reports that 35% of the population of the London Boroughs of Newham and Brent are EUSS applicants.

Follow the Blog

The FFDF London region 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.

Some 1.8 million people have applied in London, meaning 1 in 5 Londoners are EU citizens. But other UK towns such as Northampton, Boston and Corby now have major proportions of EU migrants as residents.

As the article says, these numbers are startling and are much higher than previous Government estimates of EU migration. This has meant that estimates of requirements for school places and healthcare provision have been wildly wrong.

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London's Problems (Cont.)

But the worse impact of this unplanned migration has been on housing and transport provision, particularly in London. This problem has been ignored by politicians in London for far too long. They have ignored the cause of the problems that have been created because they don't wish to be seen as critical of the social problems that such immigration has caused.

Further EU migration might be deterred in future but we will have to live with the problem that has been caused. Massive investment will be required to cope with this influx.

Telegraph article:

<https://tinyurl.com/yjtakhmf>

Andy Byford Speaks to the Standard

London Transport Commissioner Andy Byford recently gave an interview with the Evening Standard which is informative. He talks about the problem of re-establishing confidence in the underground network to help restore the finances of TfL, and the promotion of electric buses to cure air pollution problems – but that won't happen for the whole bus fleet until 2030.

One interesting point the article makes is that Mr Byford is a non-driver. He does of course have responsibility for the road network in London as his remit includes Transport for London who control the roads. Is it not astonishing that we have a Transport Commissioner who has no personal experience of using the road network which is used to transport a very high

proportion of people and goods in London? This shows the innate prejudice against motorised road transport that has been introduced into London by politicians.

Reference 1: Evening Standard Article:

<https://tinyurl.com/m54ky5te>

Reference 2: Andy Byford interview in full:

<https://tinyurl.com/262k6xpj>

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



Inflexible Trains and Trams

Birmingham Halts Metro Services

We have pointed out in previous articles that trains and trams are not just expensive to build and run, but are also very inflexible. They are also vulnerable to breakdowns of individual trains/trams that can rapidly bring the whole of a network to a halt. A good example of their inflexibility has been given by the halting

of all services on the West Midlands Metro system. A fault has been found on the trams so all 21 trams have been withdrawn from services until further notice.

Would this have happened if the service had used buses? No because trams are typically specially constructed vehicles so cannot be easily replaced while buses are more standard and can be rented at short notice.

Many people, including public transport managers and politicians have an irrational love of trams. They forget the lessons of history. Birmingham had an extensive tram network which ran from 1904 until 1953. But it was abandoned in favour of buses which enable routes to be changed very quickly.

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Trains and Trams (Cont.)

Buses also have much lower maintenance costs. That was why trams were withdrawn in Birmingham and many other UK cities after the second world war.

The closure of the West Midlands Metro service is particularly damaging because the new CAZ in Birmingham started on the 14th June. Car users now face a charge of £8 per day unless they run a compliant vehicle.

There is a Facebook group for those who oppose the Birmingham CAZ:
<https://tinyurl.com/5myttk4>



Good News – Transport Action Network Lose Legal Case

Anti-roads campaign group Transport Action Network have lost a legal challenge to halt the Government's £27.4bn Road Investment Strategy for the next 5 years. The group argued in a judicial review application that the plans were inconsistent with the Paris Agreement to reduce greenhouse gases, the net zero target for the UK in 2050 and the Climate Change Act 2008.

Mr Justice Holgate said: "It is well-established that where a decision-maker decides to take a consideration into account it is generally for him to decide how

far to go into the matter, or the manner and intensity of any inquiry into it, which judgment may only be challenged on the grounds of irrationality. Accordingly, the success of this challenge depends upon whether the claimant is able to show that the decision was vitiated by irrationality."

The judge said the real issue raised by this challenge was whether the Secretary of State failed to take into account implications for the net zero target and carbon budgets leading towards that target. He also said: "I see no reason to question the judgment reached by the DfT that the various measures of carbon emissions from the roads programme were legally insignificant, or de minimis, when related to appropriate comparators for assessing the effect on climate change objectives".



Let us hope that this is the first of many victories in the courts against those who oppose the use of road vehicles and sensible provision of capacity to meet demand.

Proposed Changes to the Highway Code

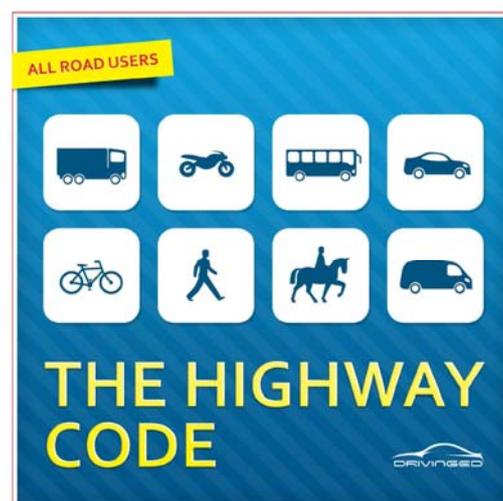
There has been some controversy about the proposed changes to the Highway Code with some pro-motoring groups such as the ABD complaining they are both prejudicial and dangerous. See the Daily Mail coverage in the link below for examples.

But are the proposed changes so unreasonable? They do give more priority to pedestrians and cyclists, such as at junctions, but the proposals are not that differ-

ent to what may already be common practice in reality. Giving way to pedestrians who are crossing at side roads is not unreasonable and giving priority to cyclists who are travelling straight ahead at junctions is hardly a big imposition.

The Code includes specific advice now about passing distances when overtaking cyclists which will clarify what you should allow. But bear in mind that most of the Highway Code is advisory and does not necessarily have the force of law.

The new Code does put some more obligations on motorists but is also puts more on cyclists. For example it warns against passing pedestrians closely at high speed. But is also says "[cyclists' should] ride in single file when drivers wish to overtake and it is safe to let them do so.



When riding in larger groups on narrow lanes, it is sometimes safer to ride two abreast".

The last part of that paragraph may be arguable but is certainly likely to cause frustration to drivers so that is one thing to which I would object.

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Highway Code (Cont.)

Likewise where it suggests cyclists should position themselves in the centre of the lane at junctions.

The Code also recommends the use of the “Dutch Reach” when moving out from the side of the road, but that is neither practical for some people in some vehicles nor necessary when wing mirrors are properly set and used.

The Code introduces a hierarchy of road users which ensures that those road users who can do the greatest harm have the greatest responsibility to reduce the danger or threat they may pose to others. This is surely not unreasonable is it?

The new Code has not yet been finalised and could do with some minor improvements but on the

That’s a very distorted view of what has happened during the pandemic. More people have walked and cycled partly because they have been working from home and hence have more time to do so, but also because they have been avoiding public transport.

The PM also says: “I know many people think that cycling and walking schemes simply increase car traffic on other roads. But there is now increasing evidence that they do not. We sometimes think of traffic as like water: if you block a stream in one place, it will find the next easiest way.

Of course some journeys by car are essential, but traffic is not a force of nature. It is a product of people’s choices. If you make it easier and safer to walk and cycle, more people choose to walk and cycle instead of driving, and the traffic falls overall”.

whole, I suggest that it is not unreasonable. You can read about the proposed changes in detail from the link below.

Will the new Code make a big change to road user behaviour? Very unlikely as most drivers have never re-read it since they originally passed their driving test and most cannot remember what it says. Cyclists have no obligation to even read the Code which is a great pity. There is more clamour for cyclists to be licensed than ever before as they so often ignore traffic lights and Highway Code rules so a test for cyclists to ensure they know the Code would surely be a good idea.

Roger Lawson

Daily Mail Article:
<https://tinyurl.com/kv8mbm4h>

Proposed Highway Code Changes:
<https://tinyurl.com/yvzw8ma>

The latter comments may be true but there is certainly evidence that closing roads which is a typical element of LTNs does increase traffic on other roads.

The Gear Change document is a panegyric to the wonders of walking and cycling, but it totally ignores the needs of major segments of the population such as the elderly or infirm, or those who rely on vehicles to transport goods, tools or multiple passengers.

It also contains some very misleading data on such issues as the take-up of cycling; and it suggests there is widespread public support for LTNs when independent surveys suggest the majority are against them. It depends on who you ask, the questions posed and who runs the survey.

Gear Change, But Downwards

The Department for Transport (DfT) have recently published a document entitled “Gear Change: One Year On”. It’s a celebration of the radical changes implemented by Government policy in the last year, with more active travel.

It also contains a forward by the Prime Minister containing such phrases as: “Hundreds of new schemes have created safe space for people to cycle and walk, supported pubs and restaurants that might otherwise have closed, and allowed us to get the exercise we need. For decades we mourned that children no longer played in the street. Now once again, in some places, they do”.



Gear Change promotes a negative, downward move to local transport that will be opposed by many.

It’s basically a propaganda piece exhorting us to change our way of life rather than the Government tackling the underlying causes of traffic congestion.

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Gear Change (Cont.)

A good example of the kind of opposition to LTNs is the formation of a new group in Dulwich called "Age Speaks".

They say "We are a group of older people within One Dulwich who have banded together to amplify our voice. As individuals we are being ignored by Southwark Council and our views and needs are being drowned out by the lobby groups the Council is listening to. Together our voices will be louder and so we are uniting to make sure that older people are heard.

We want to make sure that the Council understands the difficulties the experimental road

schemes cause us and how the Council could change things to make sure that we are treated equally. Age is a protected characteristic under the Equality Act 2010 and the Council has a duty to protect older people from unfair disadvantage.

This is particularly important now, as the Council will be making a decision on the road schemes in October, and so far has paid very little attention to the needs of older people". They are particularly critical of an Equality Impact Assessment report from Southwark Council which is a typical example of such recent publications which tend to simply ignore many of the problems faced by the elderly.

Those who write such documents tend to be young and fit and simply have no understanding of

how the elderly are impacted by attacks on the use of vehicles.

Gear Change report:
<https://tinyurl.com/yhc2fxkf>



Congestion Charge Changes

The Mayor of London has announced a number of proposed changes to the Congestion Charge (a.k.a. tax).



This tax was first introduced in 2002 when the charge to enter the central London zone was set at £5. It has subsequently been increased several times with the last change being to raise it to £15 and extend the hours to most of the day and to week-ends.

That change was proposed to be a temporary measure to ensure that traffic did not increase during the pandemic as people avoided public transport but was also clearly intended to help with TfL's budget problems.

It is now proposed to make the £15 charge permanent, but to reduce the charging hours during weekdays to 0700-1800 and weekend hours to 1200-1800.

Residents' discounts will be reinstated but the previous discount for using Autopay is not reinstated.

You can see details of these changes with a link to the public

consultation on this web page:
<https://tinyurl.com/zs4nwffv>

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOU RESPOND TO THE CONSULTATION

Comment: As is usual, the Mayor breaks a commitment that the increased charge was temporary so as to make more money. The pandemic is effectively over so there is no longer any justification for the increase. The reduction in hours may give some assistance to entertainment venues in the evening but that is a minor benefit to relatively few people in comparison with the number likely be affected by the increased tax.

The congestion charge has never proved to be effective in reducing traffic congestion and is a very expensive way of collecting more tax. Claims for its success are simply wrong.

The congestion tax should be removed!

See <https://tinyurl.com/hwp8mt3e> for more details on the history of this tax and the evidence for its failure to achieve its objectives.

Do LTNs Cut Accidents?

A study on Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) by Anna Goodman et al, which has been widely reported by the Guardian and the Mayor of London, suggests that road casualties have fallen dramatically in London after LTNs were introduced. The alleged fall is as much as 50% overall with large falls in pedestrian casualties.

One might say that if roads are closed and traffic reduced (the main objective of LTNs by their advocates although the Covid epidemic was used as the excuse to do so) then accidents are bound to fall.

Continued on next page.



LTNs & Accidents (Cont.)

On the logic that the end justifies the means then to reduce the high road casualty toll, all roads should be closed. But that would not be very practical.

But if you look at the study, you will realise that it is hardly a scientifically accurate study of the impact of LTNs.

The key measure to look at when considering road accidents is the Killed and Seriously Injured (KSIs) where the data in this study seems to be very small, as minor injuries can suffer from under reporting. That is particularly so in the pandemic as people would be reluctant to visit police stations to report accidents.

In addition it seems a lot of the reduction is to pedestrians who were probably much reduced, particularly on busy shopping

streets where most casualties take place, because of the pandemic. Few people were going shopping other than via the internet during the pandemic (many shops were closed), and the elderly and young, who are most prone to road accidents were particularly avoiding going out (schools were closed for example). The data has not been adjusted to take account of these factors.

The other issue is that road safety professionals consider that a three-year before and three-year after comparison is best used when considering the impact of road changes. This is because if road layouts are changed there tends to be a significant but only short-term impact on road user behaviour.

This is very selective data over a short period of time and not likely to reflect longer term trends. It is a great pity that Sadiq Khan has promoted this report without thinking.

There are many good reasons why LTNs are opposed by the majority of people and LTNs are not a good way to reduce road accidents.

All such simplistic solutions will fail because the reasons for accidents are complex and scientific studies need to have proper "controls" in place before conclusions are drawn. In this study, why were pedestrian casualties much reduced while other types were not and what features of the LTNs may have reduced accidents?

There are several ways to implement LTNs but the report tells us nothing about those issues.

Reference:
<https://tinyurl.com/9pk59xf5>



Beech Street to Reopen

Beech Street runs under the Barbican in the City of London. It was closed to all but zero emission vehicles recently using an Experimental Traffic Order. But that order will expire in September and it seems a mistake has been made by the City Corporation so it will be reopened. This closure was exceedingly inconvenient to Barbican residents and this is what a residents association had to say about this news:

"There has been an unexpected development in the continuing saga of the Beech Street traffic experiment. It appears that Beech Street is to re-open to all traffic for anything up to a year

when the experimental traffic order expires on 18 September 2021 because the City has bungled the introduction of a permanent traffic order which would be necessary to keep the traffic restrictions in place.

This means that on 18 September 2021, Beech Street will revert to how it was before the experiment began. All vehicles of all types will be at liberty to use Beech Street at any time without penalty, just as they were before the traffic scheme came into operation.

The traffic signs will be taken down, the cameras will be de-activated, the junctions with Bridgewater Street and Golden Lane will re-open, the concrete blocks will be taken away and the new gaps in the central reservation allowing right turns into

Lauderdale Place and Defoe House car park will be blocked off.

You may be wondering why the gaps in the central reservation have to be closed since they are of value with or without the experiment. The City says the gaps can only operate safely at low levels of traffic because vehicles making right turns into off-street premises leave their tail ends sticking out into the east-bound carriageway.

The reason why Beech Street is to re-open is a little convoluted. As many will know, the City's refusal to postpone the experiment when the pandemic struck has been challenged in the High Court.

Continued on next page.



Beech Street (Cont.)

The ground for the challenge was that a traffic experiment carried out in abnormal traffic conditions was not a fair test and that the start of the experiment should have been delayed until traffic conditions returned to normal.

The High Court hearing took place on 29 and 30 June. Prior to the hearing, on 15 April 2021, the High Court issued an injunction prohibiting the City from making the Beech Street scheme permanent in advance of the court's decision on the challenge. The City wasn't sure whether this meant it had to stop all monitoring and consultation in relation to the experiment. Instead of asking the judge for clarification, it took the decision to suspend the monitoring and consultation, which threw its timetable for making a permanent traffic order into disarray.

At the hearing, the judge said this was entirely unnecessary since she had never intended the monitoring and consultation to stop and if the City had sent her an email asking for clarification, which was what everyone else did when they wanted the meaning of a court order clarified, she would have told them there and then.

The City told the court that it would not now be possible to make a permanent traffic order until February 2022 at the earliest and possibly not until autumn 2022.

A ruling on the High Court challenge is likely to come in about a month. It is possible that the High Court will revoke the experimental traffic order which in the circumstances would be good news. It would mean that the City could start a new experiment as soon as traffic conditions returned to normal....And there would then be a proper experiment”.

New TfL Hub

Transport for London (TfL) have launched a new “Consultation Hub” where you can give feedback on projects in London - see <https://haveyoursay.tfl.gov.uk/> . You can also register to receive notifications of new consultation events.

This is not just about consulting on future projects but also submitting comments on live ones – such as the trial of E-Scooters that is currently running.

The new consultation “hub” will replace the existing consultation web site (see <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/>) which contains consultations on Streetspace schemes, bus lanes and other matters at present.

Is this a big improvement or is there any reason for the change? It's not obvious how this change will help while moving and renaming a web site is never a good idea.



This tunnel under the Thames east of the Dartford Crossing will relieve traffic congestion on the M25 and cope with the large increase in housing and businesses east of London and in Kent/Essex.

See <https://tinyurl.com/35vrvetw> for the consultation and how to respond.

Our main response to the consultation was to encourage them to get on and build it! But those living near to the route may have more detailed comments.

Lower Thames Crossing Consultation

Highways England have launched a new public consultation on the Lower Thames Crossing. A number of changes have been made after a previous consultation.





Surveys of residents in ten roads close to Dulwich Village junction show that over 80% of more than 800 local households (representing a far greater number of individuals) do not support the 24/7 closure.

Residents Oppose Road Closures in Dulwich

Campaign group OneDulwich have published this note:

80% against 24/7 closure of Dulwich Village junction

You can read their full report on their web site here: <https://www.onedulwich.uk/> along with a lot of other useful information.

It might be time for Southwark Council to stop referring to those in opposition as a small vocal minority.

Croydon Decides on ANPR

The Cabinet of Croydon Council has approved Councillor Muhammad Ali's decision to implement ANPR cameras in the Crystal Palace and South Norwood area to enforce a Low Traffic Neighbourhood. This is despite all the evidence, opposition from local residents and a public consultation.

This decision also affects residents in the adjacent borough of Bromley who may yet have some say in the matter (they previously threatened legal action).

The previous closure created horrendous traffic congestion and no doubt it will now come back. This is a completely undemocratic decision and the only option remaining is probably a legal challenge for which we believe there are good grounds.

Although there may be some exceptions made to the enforcement, these are public roads which should be available to everyone.



You can obtain the 450 page report to the Scrutiny and Overview Committee on the 23rd March on which the decision by Mr Ali was presumably based from here:

<https://tinyurl.com/a4j9ysn5>

Lewisham Cancels School Streets with No Schools

Lewisham Council has been introducing "School Streets" recently, i.e. timed closures around schools. This was apparently to overcome the objections to the road closures such as in the Lee Green LTN which has

been causing much worse traffic congestion. As there seemed to be some public support for School Streets, the Council then decided to introduce "School Streets" into roads where there were no schools. This was probably aimed at reducing through traffic.

But they have now reconsidered. They now say: "After careful consideration, and having listened to the feedback we received, we will not go ahead with the proposals. The feedback was mixed, with some strongly in favour and some strongly opposed to the approach".

Comment: It is good that they have back-tracked on this which was an unethical way of sneaking in road closures. See <https://tinyurl.com/5yr97yx4> for more details.

Lewisham LTN Consultation

Lewisham Council have also now issued a public consultation on the Lewisham and Lee Green Low Traffic LTN. But why did it take so long and why issue it in the middle of summer? It's never a very good idea to do public consultations in summer for obvious reasons.

We widely promoted this consultation which has now closed. But you can read more about it here: <https://tinyurl.com/2tmree68>

It's a typical example of giving selective data and posing biased questions to get the required answers that is so common in local council consultations.



Walking the Streets to Oppose Road Closures

Photograph to the left is of Christine, one of our Lewisham Committee Members, promoting the cause with a sandwich board. It got a lot of attention.

Lewisham Survey Results

We did a survey of Lewisham residents prior to November 2020 covering their views on the road closures and we have recently done another.

That was to see if their views have altered since changes were made to the closures (see map below), and we have also raised many more contacts since the original survey.

This is a brief summary of the results from 860 respondents (most of whom are residents of the Lewisham SE post codes and particularly the Lee Green area):

93% of respondents did not support the road closures and other measures introduced by the Council. This is only slightly lower than on our first survey.

There were high numbers of objections (between 96% and 83%) based on increased journey times and traffic congestion. Other complaints were of increased air pollution, delays to emergency service vehicles, difficulties faced by carers, delivery drivers and local service providers and difficulties faced by the elderly and disabled.



94% still thought the changes were unjustified by the Covid epidemic and the same percentage were unhappy with the lack of public consultation.

We asked an additional question this

time which was about the level of support for expansion of the ULEZ to the North/South Circular. Some 76% did not welcome it.

Note that 93% of respondents own a vehicle who obviously had a high interest in the subject of

the survey which possibly accounts for the overall answers.

With a few exceptions, one might say that anyone who owns a vehicle is unhappy with what the Council has done and the changes since last November have not pacified them (a high percentage of households in areas such as Lee Green do own a vehicle of some kind).

We got a very large number of individual comments, some ruder than others about the Council's actions, which are too numerous to cover here. But if anyone wants more details or if you have particular questions, please let me know. We have provided more details of the survey results to the council (excluding personal information of course).
Roger Lawson

Some 90% of people said their views on the closures had not changed since last November, i.e. the changes to remove some closures, to use camera enforcement and put in timed closures (school streets) were not supported.



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