

FFDF News

Freedom for Drivers Foundation Newsletter

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Editorial

The main article in this edition is on the expansion of the ULEZ scheme to outer London which Sadiq Khan is pushing ahead with despite the many objections.

That includes my personal objections because my luxury Jaguar is not compliant as I bought it in 2006. With only 55,000 miles on the clock it is good for another few years but would cost me over £50,000 to buy an equivalent new vehicle. And I only bought this diesel engine vehicle because the Government promoted the purchase of diesel cars as they claimed they would lower CO2 emissions. This is so annoying!

Us "retired" folks cannot go out and spend oodles of money unnecessarily on new cars. But many people are in a worse position than me. Those lower paid who use their cars or vans to get to work in London will be in a very difficult position. That includes the many people who drive into the London area from outside such as

from Kent and Surrey and who don't even get to vote for the Mayor of London. This is taxation without representation!

As usual when analysing politics it all comes down to money. The article on page 2 explains how the Mayor is taxing private motorists to fund the massive deficits that TfL operates. In reality public transport in London loses money because there are too many "concessionary" fares, including for people like me who don't need them, and other passengers don't cover the cost of the services provided on the buses and underground.

Meanwhile TfL staff are overpaid and the Mayor refuses to stand up to the threats of strikes by tube staff.

The only way to change this downward spiral is for the Government to remove the Mayor and start with a clean slate.

Roger Lawson
(Editor)



Quotes of the Month

"It is disappointing that the Mayor, backed by the Leader of the Opposition, is choosing not to listen to the public, expanding the zone against the overwhelming views of residents and business. I urge the Mayor to properly reconsider and respond to these serious concerns"..... Rishi Sunak on the ULEZ expansion. See page 7.

"The 'scheme' isn't actually about air quality in the final analysis. The stealthy, unstated and cynical intention remains, under the guise of ULEZ, to erect a network of traffic cameras across the whole of the Capital which can then be used at the flick of a switch to introduce road price charging for all"....Bromley Council Leader Colin Smith. See page 6.

See the last page for publisher and contact information.



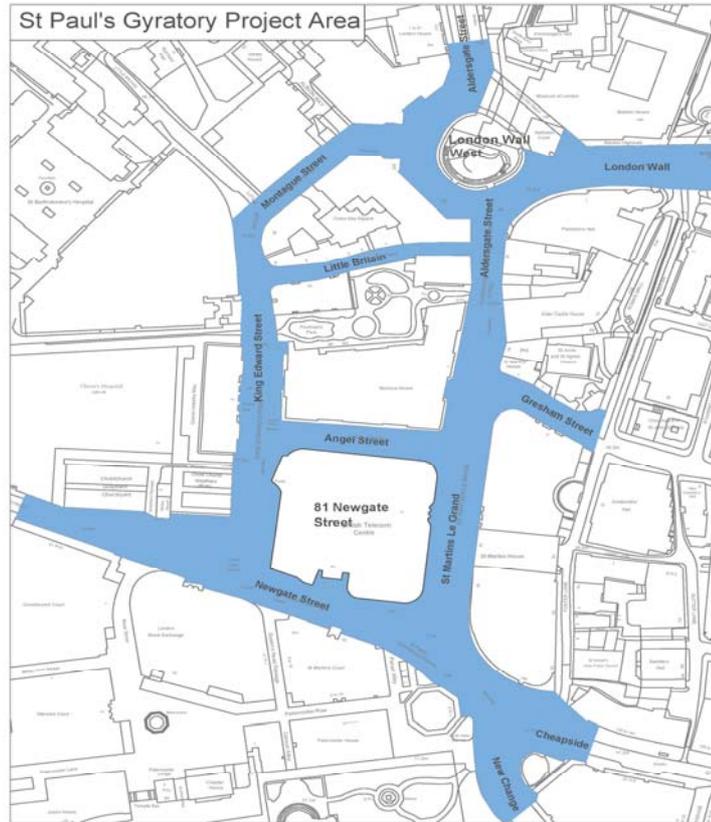
St.Pauls Gyratory Redesign

The City of London Corporation are planning to redesign the roads near St. Pauls in the City. The existing layout is shown to the right.

You can see some draft proposals and respond to a survey on how you currently use the area by going here: <https://tinyurl.com/47ha5uzm>

But it does not invite your comments on the proposals, or which option you might prefer.

It is not at all clear what benefits would be obtained from this expensive scheme and there is no information provided on the likely impact on traffic flows.



Mayor's Budget

Sadiq Khan has published a proposed budget for the GLA (including TfL) for 2023-24 (see <https://tinyurl.com/bd9hpeby>). This is yet again a budget reliant on central Government bail-outs rather than a budget that keeps expenditure within income. It's a "spend, spend, spend" socialist budget.

1. This budget again blames central Government for inadequate funding of London's public services and in particular TfL (see page 4 Paragraph 1) when the budget has not been set so that the GLA operates within its available income. This is financially reckless.

2. The document identifies a new concept of "climate budgeting" so as to achieve Net Zero Carbon

by 2030. This is financially impractical to achieve and asks effectively for even more central Government funding when there is no cost/benefit justification provided. See page 25.

3. The budget proposes a substantial increase in "Strategy and Communications" (see page 33) which is not justified. The Mayor already spends too much on public relations and social media activities a lot of which is in essence political promotion of the Mayor.

4. The budget includes the cost of expansion of the ULEZ to outer London which involves significant capital expenditure (see page 105). It is now budgeted that income from the CC, LEZ and ULEZ taxes will be over one billion pounds in 2023-24 (£1,028 million – see page 74). In effect private motorists and commercial vehicle operators are subsidising public transport losses within TfL.

This is unfair and unreasonable. There is no financial justification for expansion of the ULEZ.

5. The Mayor's attempts to reduce traffic congestion by using taxation in the CC, LEZ and ULEZ schemes has proved to be totally ineffective. Recent media reports confirm that London is now the most congested city in the world. The budget does nothing to reverse this trend as there is no expenditure proposed to improve the roads or traffic flows.

6. In summary, this budget is financially incompetent and continues to support expenditure that is higher than the income that TfL and the GLA will receive.

This is not a budget set on sound financial principles but one set based on political prejudices and unrealistic policies.

Roger Lawson

Evaluation of E-Scooter Trials – Safety is a Big Issue

There have been many reports of fatal or serious accidents involving e-scooter riders. Are they safe or provide other benefits to offset the risks to users and to pedestrians with whom they often collide?

There have been a number of Government sponsored trials of e-scooters which are subject to specific regulations imposed on users and on the providers. There has recently been a report on the trials published by Arup (see link below) which answers some of the questions that might be asked. But it does not cover

large number of accidents involve no other parties.

One objective of the trials was “to increase the availability of low-carbon transport options” but promoting cycling or walking appear to be safer options.

There are a number of interesting detail comments from users reported in the survey. Potholes and uneven road surfaces were a common problem while technical problems such as limited battery life were frequent complaints.

In summary the Arup report provides some interesting data but it is certainly not clear that the environmental benefits offset the negative safety aspects of e-scooters. Just like the more active promotion of cycling is leading to more road casualties, so will the use of e-scooters.

Moving people from walking will provide negative health benefits and it is not at all clear that there are other significant benefits pro-

vided by e-scooters. The Government must surely look at much tighter regulation or outright bans – particularly of unregistered users – if e-scooters are to be allowed.

the widespread illegal use of e-scooters which are ridden recklessly, including on pavements and without the speed limit imposed on trial users, by people not registered in such trials.

The Arup report notes that based on their surveys of users e-scooters have acted as a mode of transport in-between walking and cycling in terms of average trip distance. In fact there was a large diversion from “active” travel modes of walking and cycling to e-scooter use and relatively less from private car use.

Based on analysis of STATS19 data the casualty rate is about 3 times that of pedal cyclists. That may be due to the relative inexperience of the users of e-scooters but the users also perceived them as less safe and

Arup Report:
<https://tinyurl.com/4kfdvpew>

Roger Lawson

The Myth of the 15-Minute City

The latest attack on the use of motor vehicles is the promotion of the concept of the “15-Minute City”. This is a concept where most daily necessities can be accomplished by either walking or cycling from residents’ homes. Irrespective of the practicality of it, such a scheme can be enforced by splitting a city into neighbourhoods and banning vehicles from driving from one zone into another.



63% reported injuries which is a very high number. PACTS have reported 15 deaths to date involving e-scooters and a



The cities of Oxford and Bath have launched proposals for such schemes.

Oxfordshire County Council, which is run by Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Green Party, wants to divide the city of Oxford into six districts. In these districts, it is suggested that most household essentials will be accessible by a quarter-of-an-hour walk or bike ride, and so residents will have no need for a car. The council plans to cut car use and traffic congestion by placing strict rules on car journeys. Under the proposals, if residents drive outside of their designated district more than 100 days per year they could be fined £70. Labour councillor Duncan Enright, cabinet member for travel and development strategy, has already declared that the policy is ‘going to happen, definitely’ irrespective of the outcome of a public consultation.

Continued on next page.



15-Minute City (Cont.)

In Bath the City Council is proposing to split the city into four “cells”. Vehicles would be prohibited from driving from one cell into another. They are also pushing for Low Traffic Neighbourhoods to be implemented.

The concept of 15-minute cities was conceived on the continent where cities like Paris have promoted the idea. But nobody has shown them to be practical in the modern world. We no longer have a range of specialist shops within easy walking distance and the elderly and incapacitated cannot walk or cycle for 15 minutes. Health facilities such as hospitals are rarely within 15 minutes walk and even general practices now tend to be in larger buildings serving a wider area. The single-handed GP serving a local community is long dead.

People have come to rely on cars – either their own or taxi/minicab/PHV services – to get around. And it’s rare that people only have friends and family within 15 minutes as some move house to cheaper neighbourhoods further out from city centres. Jobs are also now rarely available in a local area so travel is required if you want to improve yourself or earn more money – even in London public transport does not always provide a practical commuting route.

Politicians who support this concept rarely consider the practical impacts of what they are proposing and ignore those who object.

As we move into a New Year, this is just the latest example of how motor vehicles and those who use them are being prejudiced by the policies of tin-pot dictators in local councils.

They think they know what is good for us but really don’t. The Government should remove the powers from local councils to destroy the road network by closing roads or limiting how they are used.

Roger Lawson



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.



Wandsworth 20 MPH Limits

I commented previously on the use of PCNs to enforce 20 mph speed limits on certain roads in the London Borough of Wandsworth. After exchanging numerous emails with the Council and looking into the relevant Acts of

Parliament I have come to the conclusion that they have no proper legal grounds for issuing PCNs in these circumstances.

They claim to have taken two legal reviews which supports their stance. But why two? Did the first one not give the right answers?

After my last question to them they simply said “It would appear we are at an impasse, legal advice is privilege information and I have nothing further to add at this time”, i.e. they seem to be stumped for an answer.

Our advice to anyone who receives a PCN for exceeding a 20-mph speed limit in Wandsworth is to challenge it and take it to appeal to London Tribunals.

We are considering a wider legal challenge and if anyone would like to assist with that please

contact us (tel: 020-8295-0378 during office hours).

The Council claims to be relying on the London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2003. (LLA & TfL Act 2003) and the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984. (RTR Act 84). Specifically Section 4(5)(a) of the LLA&TfL Act 2003 that allows for Penalty Charge Notices to be issued for contravening a Prescribed Order.

I pointed out that a prescribed order can only apply where there is a contravention of a traffic sign listed in Schedule 3 of the London Local Authorities and Transport for London Act 2003.

There is no 20 mph sign limit listed in Schedule 3.

Continued on next page.



Wandsworth 20 (Cont.)

And Section 4(6)(a) says: “No penalty charge shall be payable under subsection (5)(a) above where—(a) the person acting in contravention of the prescribed order also fails to comply with an indication given by a scheduled section 36 traffic sign; or....”.

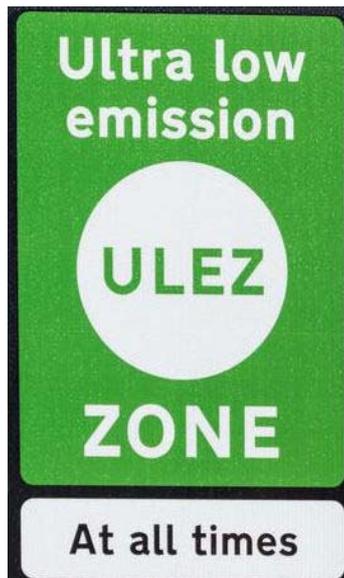
They also claimed support of Section 84 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 which specifically refers to “Speed limits on roads other than restricted roads” so only applies to non-restricted roads. The roads under discussion are almost certainly “restricted roads”.

The legislation in this area is exceedingly complex and difficult to understand but I believe they have simply misinterpreted it in their enthusiasm to raise money from drivers who might not challenge PCNs.

Of course that assumes that the vehicle standards remain the same but don't bet on that! The Mayor could use the new cameras to impose a London-wide charging scheme on all vehicles which is clearly his ambition.

The article also reports that some boroughs may try to frustrate operation by blocking the erection of cameras which no doubt many residents of the outer London boroughs will welcome.

Comment: This is yet another example of the financial incompetence of Sadiq Khan. Spending money to enable the collection of more taxes is just another financial imposition on London residents that will increase the cost of living.



ULEZ Extension

The following articles are all about the extension of the Ultra Low Emission Zone in London.

This has generated a lot of controversy even though many people will not be affected by

Remember there is no significant improvement in air quality from the ULEZ expansion. It's just a money-making scheme.

Evening Standard article: <https://tinyurl.com/2dv7z3uf>

Campaigns Against ULEZ Expansion Increasing

The activities of campaigns against the expansion of the ULEZ to outer London are growing as people realise the financial impact it will have. There is an active Facebook group named “Action Against ULEZ Extension” which you can join.

Gareth Bacon, MP for Orpington has been active in promoting opposition in South-East London,

it immediately—for example those who have bought a new car in the last few years. But the low paid or elderly who run older cars or vans will be financially devastated when there is no justification for it as it will have negligible impact on air pollution in the outer London boroughs.

The Financial Lunacy of the ULEZ Expansion

The London Evening Standard have published a good article highlighting the financial lunacy of the ULEZ scheme. By 2027 they suggest that the scheme will generate zero income even though it will cost £160 million to implement the expansion. TfL might recover the £160m in the first year from charges but the vehicle population will rapidly become compliant and after that the cost of running the scheme might exceed income from charges on non-compliant vehicles and fines.



and Paul Scully, Conservative MP for Sutton and Cheam, is now raising donations to fund an opposition campaign – see: <https://tinyurl.com/2txjnhri>

Paul says “This new tax will hit thousands of hardworking people and small businesses, just when they can least afford it”. He's certainly right there and remember it will have negligible impact on air quality. It's just another tax to bail out Sadiq Khan's financial mismanagement.

London Boroughs Against

A number of London Boroughs have issued a joint statement condemning the proposed expansion of the ULEZ scheme.

Continued on next page.



The statement they issued is on the right.

Bromley Council were particularly vociferous with remarks that included this comment from Councillor Colin Smith: "The 'scheme' isn't actually about air quality in the final analysis. The stealthy, unstated and cynical intention remains, under the guise of ULEZ, to erect a network of traffic cameras across the whole of the Capital which can then be used at the flick of a switch to introduce road price charging for all".

Together with the other London Boroughs opposed to the expansion they are considering a legal challenge and have issued a pre-action protocol letter. See <https://tinyurl.com/yk5fbpkk> for the full announcement. The London Borough of Richmond has also come out against the ULEZ expansion and according to a report in the Daily Mail

Coalition of London boroughs insist Mayor supplies ULEZ expansion evidence

The London boroughs of Hillingdon, Bexley, Bromley and Harrow have this week written to the Mayor of London raising serious concerns around his ULEZ expansion plans and the adverse effects this will have on our residents, businesses and visitors to outer London.

Our growing coalition of London councils are not satisfied with the justification for the expansion and remain strongly opposed to it. Until we have seen compelling evidence to the contrary, it remains our position that this scheme will not translate successfully to outer London and the negative impact to local households and economies will far outweigh the negligible air quality benefits.



the borough of Sutton will refuse planning permission for ULEZ signs and other services such as electricity cables. They will not co-operate with TfL in any way.

Meanwhile central Government claims to have taken legal advice on blocking Sadiq Khan's ULEZ expansion and deny they can do this. But they have two options: 1) Change the Greater London Authority Act 1999 which is

alleged to authorise this, or threaten to do so; or 2) Withdraw any further funding to TfL, or threaten to do so.

No more financial support would kill off any expenditure by TfL to install the cameras and other equipment for the expansion and put the Mayor into an impossible financial situation.



The Government ultimately has the power to change legislation that covers London and that includes the power to remove the Mayor if necessary!

So they should stop hiding behind legal sophistry and take some action.

It is difficult to understand why the Government is not taking action on this. Are they hoping that if Sadiq Khan proceeds he will become so unpopular he will lose the election in 2024? But that is simply too late. We need less playing at politics and more immediate action!

London Air Quality and ULEZ

Sadiq Khan issued a tweet saying that "London has been ranked the 18th most polluted city in the world based on air quality, light pollution and traffic

congestion". But this is a lie and the tweet has subsequently been deleted.

London is nowhere near 18th most polluted city in the world, on any of these measures. IQair ranks London as the 3739th in the world on air pollution. It is ranked 55th out of just 404 cities on congestion, and the UN reports mean noise pollution as joint 28th out of the 61 cities measured.

It is regrettable that Sadiq Khan and his PR team find it necessary to scare the public in this way in support of his financially driven policies to extract more taxes from Londoners. There is simply no evidence that poor air quality is a major health problem in London.

We have said before that the Government could halt the planned expansion of the ULEZ.

Thanks to one of our contacts for the following explanation of the legal position:

"The root cause of the problem is the Greater London Authority Act 1999, which was created during Tony Blair's New Labour administration, along with the devolved Scottish and Welsh administrations.

Section 295 and schedule 23 of the GLA Act 1999 enables TfL, the Mayor and London Borough Councils to enforce their road user charging schemes such as congestion charge, ULEZ etc.

If you read the GLA Act 1999 carefully, the Secretary of State does have powers to veto/block road user charging schemes on the grounds of "the incompatibility is detrimental to the interests of persons resident in England outside Greater London."

Continued on next page.



I have written to Mark Harper, Secretary of State for Transport, pointing out he does have the power to block the ULEZ expansion and should do so.

Also I have suggested that the Government should repeal the relevant clauses from the legislations to take road user charging powers away from the Mayors and local authorities, and even make road user charging powers illegal!

With a Conservative majority in the Commons they could also repeal the GLA Act 1999 which will then abolish the Mayor of London and transfer TfL back to Government control.

Roger Lawson

Rishi Sunak Criticises ULEZ Expansion and Scrappage Scheme Announced

At Prime Minister's Question Time Rishi Sunak said Sadiq Khan should "listen to the public" and scrap the planned expansion of the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) to all of London. He also said that it is the "overwhelming" view of London residents that the levy should not be expanded.

Rishi Sunak and the Government have the power to stop the ULEZ expansion so why don't they do so?

Scrappage Scheme

Meanwhile TfL have announced some details of a scrappage scheme to help some owners of non-ULEZ compliant vehicles. See <https://tinyurl.com/2p87f4yu>

But it's unlikely to help many people. Only those car owners receiving social security benefits or are registered disabled will qualify and the maximum grant is £2,000. You can't buy a new car, or even a decent second-hand one for that money!

It may help sole traders, small businesses and charities with old diesel vans and buses where the allowance is higher.

There is also a mention of some vehicles which might qualify for a "retrofit" that will make them compliant but it seems unlikely to be of use to most owners of older diesel cars. However you can register an interest in a retrofit solution for your vehicle.

Legal Fundraising on ULEZ Expansion

There is a legal claim for a judicial review of the ULEZ expansion being formulated and a fund to finance the action has been set up. See <https://tinyurl.com/fn29ywj>

This appears to be a credible case so we recommend that you support it by making a donation as we have done.

Avoiding the ULEZ and Travel Mode Trends

Several outer London boroughs say they will try to frustrate the extension of the ULEZ scheme by refusing TfL permission to put up cameras or signs. The response of the Mayor, who seems to think that he holds a "Divine Right of Mayors" to do whatever he wants, is that they can enforce it by just putting up cameras on traffic lights which they do control.

But this is not as simple as they make out. For example as a resident of Chislehurst in the London Borough of Bromley I can escape from the ghetto to reach the M20 and M25 without going through any traffic lights.

Continued on next page.



The basis of the case will be that the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, failed to take into consideration the replies to the ULEZ expansion consultation and other factors, made false statements about the expansion of the ULEZ and otherwise attempted to

manipulate the results of the consultation.

PLEASE MAKE A DONATION TO SUPPORT THE LEGAL ACTION

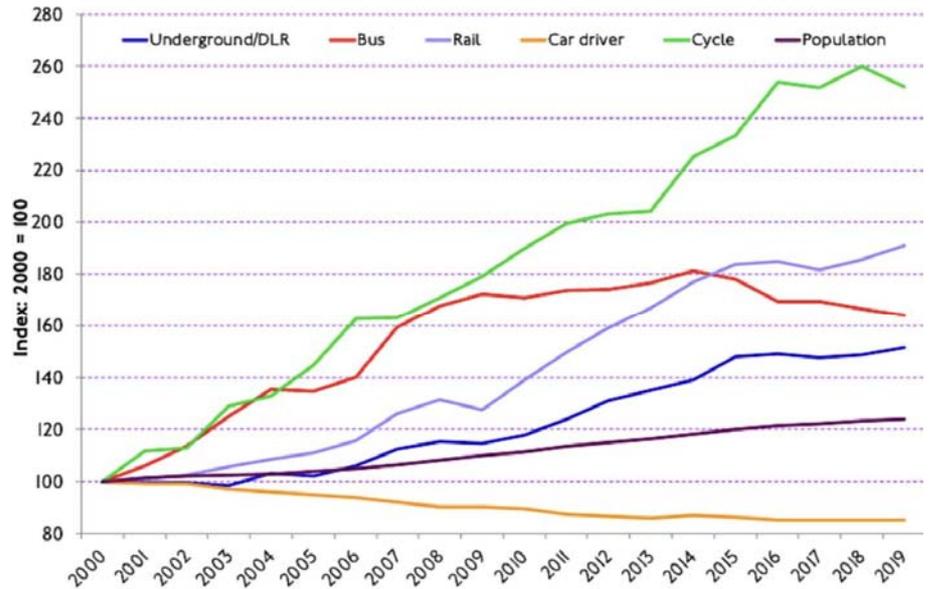
I can also get into central Bromley by using alternative minor roads.

In addition if TfL cannot put up warning signs it will make ULEZ penalties unenforceable.

Sadiq Khan surely needs to reconsider his plans which he is now promoting by repeatedly lying about the impact of air pollution in London on deaths.

There are no deaths directly attributable to air pollution and only one where it was considered a contributory factor when the person concerned suffered from other serious medical problems.

The motivation for extending the ULEZ is clearly financial as it will have negligible impact on air pollution and all the extra cameras installed as a result



Source: TfL City Planning.

will enable a road charging scheme for ALL vehicles to be introduced!

One justification given by the Mayor for the ULEZ is to reduce the increase in traffic and tackle congestion.



But private car use has been falling for some years.

See the chart above which gives the trends in travel modes over the last 20 years in London.

Increases in traffic congestion have been caused by reductions in road space and mismanagement of the road network by TfL.

Roger Lawson

Readers Letter

A letter from Thomas Foster

Why is it that down here in London and the outer limits of what Mr Sadiq Khan classes as London suburbs, ie the outer Kentish towns of Sidcup, Crayford etc we are all standing for it. Up in Manchester people have complained enough and it still is not being enforced even though all the sign's and camera's have been installed. I live in the Dartford area and as from August 29th 2023 I will need to pay to go

shopping in certain shops where we go for goods. That date is a great date for it as a wedding anniversary present from him. I will not even be able to go and visit my family members as I will then need to pay £12.50 to go and visit.

My address is a KENT one and NOT a LONDON one so why should I have to pay this and why do all the other residents in these outer so called suburbs of London? We cannot even get to vote on who gets to be the Mayor of London. Dartford has it's own Mayor and Mr Khan has the right to override his thought's. This is wrong, and as I am a pensioner I cannot afford to change my vehicle and I cannot afford his ULEZ levy.

Sorry for my rant but that's how I feel. I spent 50 years working and paying all my due's and I get a pittance of a pension, which is a fraction of a proper living wage. I get a month's pension which I used to earn in a week—that's if I didn't do any overtime. <END>

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<https://freedomfordrivers.blog/>

To get the latest news as it appears, follow the blog by entering your email address in the box at the foot of blog articles.





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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

Contact and Publisher Information

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