

FFDF News

Freedom for Drivers Foundation Newsletter

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Editorial

The very latest news is that London Transport Commissioner Andy Byford has resigned after only 2 years in the job. As head of TfL he received some plaudits for his work even from Sadiq Khan, but I am not so sure he deserves them as he didn't manage to put TfL on a sound financial basis—it is still totally reliant on central Government bail-outs.

This partly results from his failure to confront the unions and he may have quit because more battles with them are looming, particularly as the Government has announced measures to limit strikes in essential services.

Filling his position will not be easy but could we please have someone who knows how to run a business profitably, not just someone who has worked all their life in public transport.

The Chancellor's announcements of tax cuts were welcomed by many people but campaigners for lower petrol and diesel prices were disappointed.

The concern about high fuel costs very much depends on how many miles you drive per annum.

As someone who now drives relatively few miles I would much prefer any reductions in tax to come from income tax so I welcome the Chancellor's statement. Income taxes are costs you cannot easily avoid but fuel costs you can by driving less and changing to more economic vehicles. For example instead of physical meetings I now frequently use Zoom conference calls and webinars—this cuts mileage driven and travel time.

The total cost of running cars has now reduced very substantially from what it was when I first started driving over 50 years ago. They are more fuel efficient and more reliable and don't rust away so quickly. I know that from my own financial records of income and expenditure that go back that far. I am spending less on motoring than I did years ago.

Is recording all expenditure a bit manic? I don't think so. Even John D. Rockefeller, the richest person in the world in the 1920s used to do so. For those hit hard by the rise in the cost of living I recommend it as a way to track and control where your cash is going.

Roger Lawson
(Editor)



Quotes of the Month

"I note that the 'elderly and infirm' were completely ignored again! Did AgeUK get an invitation to present their views? Anyway, lots of 'walking and cycling' is hardly a viable choice for this group of our community and should be offered some measure of 'exemption' from this type of enforced 'officialdom'!".....Peter Beattie commenting on our LTN article—see page 3.





ULEZ Expansion— A Complete Fraud

I have now had time to read the “London-wide ULEZ Integrated Impact Assessment” report produced by Jacobs (see below).

report states that “health benefits from reductions in PM2.5 are relatively small”.

7. The problem of people visiting hospitals within the zone who are not able to use public transport for a variety of reasons (such as vulnerable to covid or other infections) is mentioned and there is a congestion/ULEZ refund scheme operated by hospitals but many people don't know about it. It is also complex to make a claim as this writer knows from personal experience.

8. In reality there are numerous people that will be negatively impacted or incur substantial costs which the report effectively glosses over. Some of the impacts are ignored – such as the impact on retail businesses in outer London, while the suggested “mitigation” measures are unlikely to be very effective.

This was commissioned by TfL on the expansion of the ULEZ scheme to the whole of London. It makes for interesting reading and covers the likely impact on the environment, on health, on equality and on the economy. I'll pick out some key points:

1. They forecast a reduction of 1.7% in total car trips across Greater London as a result, but there would be a big reduction in people driving into London from outside for shopping and other purposes of 14.2%. In effect the scheme would impact many people who don't even live in London and have no vote on the Mayor. In the outer London suburbs and further out there are a lot of retired and poorer people who run vehicles that are non-compliant and cannot afford to buy new ones.

2. A scrappage scheme is proposed to help people move to compliant vehicles but that would

9. The report ignores the financial cost of expanding the scheme with thousands of new camera and road signs required.

In summary this report shows how damaging the expansion will be with many negative impacts and negligible positive ones, but will Mayor Sadiq Khan pay any attention? We will see soon no doubt.

Jacobs Report:
<https://tinyurl.com/39bdn3k4>

Roger Lawson

Latest Air Quality in Bromley

Data Shows No Need for ULEZ Expansion

only likely be targeted at a small minority of affected people.

3. They identify differential impacts (i.e. negative ones) on the disabled and people with restricted mobility who need to shop or visit health facilities but don't propose any mitigation measures to tackle that problem.

4. They recognise the impact on tradespeople and small businesses that operate non-compliant LGVs.

5. The reduction in air pollution in Greater London would be miniscule – about 0.1% in the important PM2.5 emissions for example (see Page 48 of the Report). Nobody is going to notice this and it won't have any significant impact on health outcomes.

6. The negligible impact on health is shown in tables 6.2 onwards and the



The latest Air Quality Annual Status Report for the London Borough of Bromley which has just been published shows there is no justification for the expansion of the ULEZ scheme to outer London boroughs like Bromley.

To quote from a Council report: “There were no monitored exceedances of the annual or daily mean for Particulate Matter (PM10) in 2021. The annual average was 15.4µgm-3 . This is well below the national limit of 40µgm-3. The annual mean for Particulate Matter (PM2.5) concentration in 2021 was 9.7µgm-3. This was also well below the national limit of 20µgm-3 .

Historically, the trend in Nitrogen Dioxide (NO2) concentration at the Harwood Avenue permanent continuous monitoring station, shows a decreasing trend.

Continued on next page.



Air Quality in Bromley (Cont.)

There was a slight increase in NOx from 2020 to 2021. This was due to life returning to normal following the changes to traffic levels during the COVID-19 pandemic and related lockdowns. The trends in NO2 concentrations for diffusion tube monitoring sites (for those with more than one year of data) for the 2015 – 2021 period also show evidence of a decreasing trend and all sites were below the national limit”.

In summary the measured pollution levels are well below national standards even on busy roads and the trend is downwards. There are unlikely to be any negative health impacts from the current levels of air pollution.



You can see the full report in the Agenda Reports Pack (Item 17) for the Council meeting on the 6th September here: <https://tinyurl.com/4s3f5b75>

Bromley Council Opposes

ULEZ Expansion

The London Borough of Bromley has opposed the expansion of the ULEZ to cover the borough and have condemned it as a “cynical tax raid against the borough’s residents”.



Councillor Colin Smith, Leader of Bromley Council, said, “Quite simply, this proposal is wrong on just about every level and is really about paving the way for the introduction of road charging taxes across the whole of London by stealth.

Our borough already has amongst, if not actually the best air quality levels in London, and if this were truly about improving air quality even further, which we obviously support, those responsible would be thinking far harder in terms of broadening the scrap-page scheme for non-compliant vehicles and accelerating the roll out of green vehicle charging points and buses”.

You can read his full response to the consultation on ULEZ expansion here: <https://tinyurl.com/ycxbzr6f>

Comment: The Council’s response is well argued and

basically says that the Council is already doing a good job of minimising and reducing air pollution while the expansion of the ULEZ to cover outer London will not significantly help and will be very costly for many residents.

Expansion of the ULEZ to outer London will hit those with older vehicles hard which are generally the poorer segment of the population. It’s a symptom of Mayor Sadiq Khan’s hatred of cars despite the fact that public transport in outer London cannot be relied on and many people drive into the outer boroughs from surrounding counties for employment and shopping.

Expansion of the ULEZ makes no economic sense – the money involved would be better spent on other measures to reduce air pollution which is already very low in boroughs such as Bromley.

Spurious Evidence on the Benefits of LTNs

Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) have been justified on the basis that they reduce traffic and encourage more active travel (walking and cycling). The main evidence used to support this claim is a report prepared for and paid for by Transport for London. It was written by Dr. Rachel Aldred et al – see link below. Dr (now Prof.) Aldred from the University of Westminster has written extensively on the benefits of active travel schemes, was actually a trustee of the London Cycling Campaign (LCC) when the report was commissioned and her work has been funded by TfL.

Continued on next page.



LTNs (Cont.)

The Mayor of London does of course have a policy to encourage more active travel and has been funding LTN schemes. In summary therefore both the commissioning organisation and the researchers were not independent but had an in-built conflict of interest in the outcome of the research.

The report is a “longitudinal” study of three London boroughs – Enfield, Kingston and Waltham Forest over the years 2016 to 2021. The results are based on survey respondents who lived in the area.

How were the survey respondents recruited? Initially by random household sampling but after a very low response rate they added people from TfL databases of Oyster users and

cyclists. Hardly an unbiased sample!

Were there actual changes in travel behaviour during the phases of the study? There were reported reductions in minutes of car travel in the past week but also reductions in minutes of cycling and walking. But this was a period when the Covid epidemic was rampant and there was much more working from home, and avoidance of travel in general.

Were the changes in travel modes statistically significant anyway and were there adequate control groups? We do not know. In summary this report is quite useless as a scientific study of the impact of LTNs.

People and Places Final Report – available from here: <https://tinyurl.com/9vhjac9v>

Sadiq Khan’s Book and Tower Hamlets Legal Action on LTN

Sadiq Khan is publishing a book he has written. It’s called “Breathe: Tackling the Climate Emergency” and links air pollution to climate change. Khan was diagnosed with asthma a few years ago at the age of 51 – in other words he suffers from “adult-onset asthma” which is moderately rare and can be caused by a number of different things – but not usually background air pollution. Since then he has been promoting restrictions on vehicles to improve air quality and to raise taxes to support Transport for London.



But there is no evidence that the ULEZ scheme has reduced the incidence of asthma which is rising from other causes.

Without reading it (it’s not yet available) the book seems to be a manifesto for climate activists. One wonders how the Mayor found time to write this book as he has so many other problems to deal with. Perhaps it was ghost written.

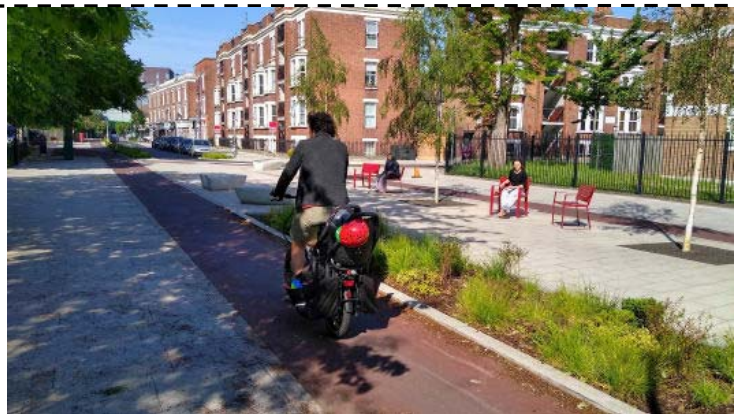
One can sympathise with anyone who has asthma, but this book already looks like a political manifesto to justify the Mayor’s actions rather than a scientific analysis of air pollution or climate change issues.

Tower Hamlets LTN

Another item of recent news is the threat of legal action over plans to remove road closures in Tower Hamlets after the election of Mayor Lutfur Rahman who had

it as a manifesto promise. A group called “Save our Safer Streets in Tower Hamlets” is raising money for a legal challenge via a judicial review and has raised over £13,000 so far.

A particular focus is on the closure of Old Bethnal Green Road under the “Liveable Streets” programme (see photo above). This was a “B” road and carried as many as 8,000 vehicles per day it is claimed – that surely demonstrates how important it was as part of the local road distribution network!



Comment: The grounds for a judicial review seem poor and the groups budget for it totally inadequate even if it is permitted. Councillors have wide discretion on decision making so long as it is not perverse. The basis of the challenge is poor public consultation but even if the case was permitted and won it might just result in more money being wasted on more consultation. This attempt to overturn the will of voters should not be allowed.



Cambridge and New York Congestion Charges?

Both the City of Cambridge in England and the City of New York in the USA are currently considering congestion charging schemes. That's despite the fact that the London scheme has proved to be an abject failure in cutting congestion even after

increases in the charge several times.

The Cambridge scheme has been proposed by the Greater Cambridge Partnership and would impose a charge of £5 for private vehicles between 7am and 7pm on weekdays. There may be some exemptions and bus fares may be able to be reduced as a result – but there are no promises on either.

This would be another camera enforced scheme, like the London one.

Editor: Note that there was a debate on a proposed congestion charge for Cambridge at which I spoke in 2008. See a report on the meeting here: <https://tinyurl.com/ms92j3c7>

The vote at the end was against one.

Note there is a petition against the Cambridge congestion

charge. Please sign it here: <https://chnq.it/VT9RrMV8Mh>

New York has also been considering a congestion charge scheme for some time but there has been strong opposition. Particularly from New Jersey residents who already pay high tolls to cross bridges into the City. The proposed charge by the Metropolitan Transit Authority (MTA) to drive into downtown Manhattan would be \$23 and would be used to subsidise public transport fares. New York has the same problem as London. Transit ridership has rebounded slower than the MTA was anticipating after the pandemic. Weekday subway ridership is about 60% of 2019 levels. Revenue used to cover about half of the MTA's operating costs but now pay for 30%, according to the MTA.

Any congestion charge scheme would still need Federal approval.

Roger Lawson

Telegraph Article on Our Right to Drive Freely

There was a very good article by David Frost on the right to drive freely published by the Daily Telegraph on 29/7/2022. He talks about a world where private cars are banned. He suggests Governments haven't quite done that but there are people who want to ban cars in some large cities and suggests one day some feeble Red-Green mayor somewhere in Europe will surely give in to it. Meanwhile our leaders are doing everything short of it.

To quote from the article: "But this is not just about technology. It is about human flourishing. The bicycle first allowed people to move from where they lived. The car hugely expanded it. The van and delivery lorry got goods all around the country and the car gave people access to this huge choice.

People could go out whatever the weather. They could buy enough food for a week and free up time for things they preferred doing.

The disabled, the old, or just those seeking a day out somewhere different, all could get to where they needed to go"; and "There is obviously no substitute for the car outside urban areas.

But, even in big cities, public transport will never do everything we need.

It runs where the planners want it to go and when the transport unions allow it. Not everyone wants to travel to the city centre or along a tube line.

Only the private car, under autonomous control, can take you where you want to go. Too many of our modern rulers would rather you didn't."

He concludes with the comment "Cars are about freedom – going where you want and no one saying you can't". That well summarises what the Freedom for Drivers Foundation stands for.



The Death of the UK Motor Industry?

Toyota have warned the Government that it may cease making cars in the UK if a ban on sales of hybrid vehicles is introduced. That is currently scheduled for 2035 but even after 2030 there may be very tight restrictions on what qualifies for an exemption. Self-charging cars such as the Corolla might not qualify.

Toyota have a big car manufacturing plant employing 3,000 in Burnaston, Derbyshire and in Deeside, North Wales. There is also the problem that Toyota might be impacted by Government mandates on the proportion of vehicles sold that are purely electric when Toyota has promoted hybrid vehicles for some years starting with the Prius.



It is a great pity that the UK Government is not encouraging the retention of hybrid vehicle sales past 2030 or 2035 which are not far away now.

Purely electric vehicles

are far from ideal for those in remote parts of the country where charging points are limited, or for those who do not have off-road parking.

A self-charging hybrid can go some distance on electric power alone so can substantially reduce emissions on short trips which are common in city driving conditions.



Honda has also closed their plant in Swindon and these closures will reduce UK car production very significantly. Meanwhile it looks like Aston Martin will need another bailout to keep it afloat.

The Corolla is a reasonably priced self-charging hybrid with either a 1.8 or 2.0 litre petrol engine. It is a reasonable compromise between emission reduction and flexibility.

TfL Board Meeting and TfL Finances

There was a Transport for London (TfL) Board Meeting on the 9th of August to discuss negotiations with the Government on finance. Such meetings should be public but in fact almost all the meeting was closed to the public; even the Government representative who has a seat on the board was excluded.

But there is an interesting board paper that spells out the dire financial position of the organisation. In summary they need £900m in Government subsidies to stay afloat in the current financial year, i.e. to offset the shortfall in revenue from the pandemic.

The paper says this: "The 2022/23 TfL Budget is based on a 'managed decline' scenario. This involved significant service reductions, deteriorating asset condition and no new enhancement schemes.

This not only would mean that we will fail to make progress on critical priorities such as safety, decarbonisation and air quality, but it would trap London's transport network in a vicious circle of deteriorating services and declining demand. Avoiding managed decline is critical to supporting the London economic recovery, and therefore the national economic recovery, following the pandemic".

In essence they want to continue spending instead of cutting their cloth to meet the new circumstances.

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<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.

TfL Finances (Cont.)

They need £1.2 billion just to balance the budget in the current financial year and even more for “longer-term capital funding to avoid the managed decline scenario”.

Looking at TfL as a business (which is what it is) this is surely pure hogwash. Businesses that do not reduce their expenditure to match income end up going bust. As will TfL unless they change their approach.

It’s interesting to look at who is on the board of TfL. It’s full of academics, trade unionists and politicians, not business people. And it’s chaired by Sadiq Khan. This is one of the key problems. Until TfL is taken out of the control of the Mayor and the board is replaced by people with business experience of running transport

requiring TfL to come up with options for reform of TfL’s pension scheme at pace, which could well lead to more industrial action and more disruption for commuters”.

Comment: By funding gap he means TfL will continue to lose money. Users of TfL services, particularly bus passengers, will continue to be massively subsidised instead of paying the true cost of their journeys. Why should that be so?

Grant Shapps has yet again avoided the proper decision which should have been to take control of TfL away from the Mayor. Will the Mayor stand up to unions when strikes are threatened over changes to working practices and pension schemes? I doubt it.

Roger Lawson

organisations, nothing will change. They will continue to rely on Government (i.e. taxpayer) hand-outs rather than taking the tough decisions necessary.

Roger Lawson

Another Bail-Out for TfL Agreed

Subsequent to the aforementioned TfL board meeting, Transport Minister Grant Shapps and Mayor Sadiq Khan agreed another £1.6 million of funding for Transport for London (TfL) as part of a “long-term settlement”. That now makes a total of £6 billion of Government funding which of course comes from taxpayers not just in London but from the whole country. That’s about £100 for every man, woman and child in the UK.

The funding will support new Piccadilly line trains, as well as modernisations and upgrades across the District, Metropolitan, Hammersmith and City and Circle lines. It will also support the long-awaited repair of Hammersmith Bridge, the extension of the Northern Line, improvements to Elephant and Castle station and £80 million every year for active travel schemes (mainly cycling schemes).

The Mayor has agreed as part of the settlement to reform pensions and work on the introduction of driverless trains on the underground. But he is not happy with the outcome. He said in a press release: “The Government is still leaving TfL with a significant funding gap, meaning we will likely have to increase fares in the future and still proceed with some cuts to bus services. There are also onerous strings attached, such as the Government’s condition



Truss Victory – But Do We Trust Her to Deliver?

Liz Truss won the election for Conservative Party Leader and therefore became our Prime Minister. She won by the expected large majority but she lacks charisma. Her acceptance speech was a lacklustre bunch of pedantic soundbites.

She has promised to cut taxes and tackle the energy crisis, but do we trust her to deliver?

Having a surname that is a homophone of trust should have helped her political career but now she faces real problems in the UK economy and social unrest over the cost of living. This will not be helped by the latest news that Russia has turned off the Nord Stream gas pipeline and has no intention of

reopening it while sanctions persist. This will drive gas prices even higher.

How will her policies affect drivers? She did hint at some positive changes in her election campaign such as reviewing motorway speed limits and halting Smart Motorways. But I doubt there will be major changes while the commitment to Net Zero remains and she focusses on the energy crisis and cost of living. But one positive aspect for Londoners is that she does live in west Greenwich and was actually a Greenwich councillor for four years before she became an MP. She might understand the problems faced by those who live in the London suburbs in recent years. She needs to bring Sadiq Khan to heel though to really have a positive impact.

Roger Lawson

New Transport Ministers

With a new Prime Minister we are getting a new Cabinet. Secretary of State for Transport Grant Shapps has gone, thank god, to be replaced by Anne-Marie Trevelyan. She might be pro road building as in 2007 she campaigned to dual the A1 in the North of England.

Liz Truss also supports road building – in a recent speech she said “We will get spades in the ground to make sure people are not facing unaffordable energy bills and we will also make sure, that we are building hospitals, schools, roads, and broadband”.

Other new Ministers in the Department for Transport are Kevin Foster MP and Lucy Frazer MP.

This is all positive news. Other good news is that Andrew Gilligan, the transport advisor to Boris Johnson and a keen promoter of cycling, has gone.

Grant Shapps Wants a Bus Fare Cap

Before his departure, Transport Minister Grant Shapps wrote an article published in the Daily Telegraph which argues that the Government should impose a cap of £2 on all bus fares in England outside London. This would be paid for by a taxpayers’ subsidy of £260 million for 12 months.

It is suggested this cap would help those most affected by the cost-of-living crisis. Needless to say, this idea has apparently been opposed by HM Treasury.

Comment: This is economic lunacy. For example the typical bus far from London to Newcastle is £10 so £2 clearly nowhere near covers the cost of providing the service. In reality those who can currently afford the £10 would be massively subsidised so it would be a subsidy for both the wealthy and the poor, i.e. it’s not a targeted subsidy for those who can least afford to travel as claimed.

It would also undermine the economics of the rail network as people would choose to travel by bus rather than trains. So the true cost would be even higher as the Government already subsidises rail travel and those subsidies would need to increase if usage was reduced.

Once you start interfering in the economics of transport, you distort demand. Free or low cost travel increases demand which is then supplied at an uneconomic rate.



Where’s the £260 million coming from? From taxes that we all pay so raising the tax burden and reducing the income of everyone else.

This was yet another hare-brained scheme from Grant Shapps to follow on from his support of LTNs, active travel, HS2 and bail-outs of TfL.

Roger Lawson

Oxfordshire To Ban Private Cars

The attacks on private cars continue. Oxfordshire County Council is proposing to restrict private cars from the City Centre altogether but permitting taxis, PHVs, LGVs, HGVs etc.

Local residents will be given permits to use on 100 days per year. This draconian measure is subject to a public consultation – see <https://tinyurl.com/2awbhs64>

Please respond to it before the 3rd October although this is a very biased survey with way too many questions.

I added these comments however: “This survey is totally biased with preconceived answers to the questions imposed to get the answers you are looking for. A total disgrace!”.

I hope the new Transport Ministers will put a stop to such schemes which are inherently illogical.

Roger Lawson



ANPR Cameras Eroding Privacy

Are you concerned about the erosion of privacy? One issue that is coming to the fore but has not yet caught the attention of the public is the use of cameras on our roads to monitor our behaviour and potentially to catch criminals.



Continued on next page.

ANPR Cameras (Cont.)

The cameras used to monitor drivers to ensure they pay the Congestion Charge or ULEZ charges were never intended to be routinely used by the police. Limited access to ANPR cameras was granted for specific investigations some years ago but Sadiq Khan now wants to expand their use. This is being legally challenged by London Assembly Member Sian Berry and an organisation called the Open Rights Group. Ms Berry has said: "I am deeply disappointed that the Mayor has not listened to repeated warnings that sharing the cameras from the expanded clean air zone with the police was a huge increase in surveillance of Londoners that should not be signed off by his office. I have been telling the Mayor since 2019 that sharing this data with the police is wrong and that

Londoners must have their say in any decision".

The expanded use of the cameras might include pictures of vehicles and their occupants and include the use of facial recognition technology which the Met already has available.

The Information Commissioners Office (ICO) has laid down guidelines on the use of cameras in public places and in essence there needs to be reasonable justification. There is a Biometrics and Surveillance Camera Commissioner who has recently questioned the legality of the use of ANPR cameras to enforce the proposed expanded ULEZ. He said there is limited evidence it would benefit society and therefore its legality is questionable.

Cameras are now being used to enforce Low Traffic Neighbourhood and School Street schemes by some Councils and this has turned into a money-making

project in many cases. The profits to be made from such schemes should not be a justification for the use of ANPR cameras but they often are.

Comment: This whole area needs to be more subject to public debate and regulation. Some people think that expanding surveillance would reduce crime although there is limited evidence to support that. Others think that they do not want to live in a surveillance society where your every move is monitored and recorded.

One question is how cost effective such monitoring would be. Accessing ANPR images when specifically required and justified for the investigation of crimes is one thing. But a more general monitoring capability might involve enormous costs even if some of the activity could be automated.



Regulating Cycling – Is It Overdue?

Ex-Transport Minister Grant Shapps has suggested that cyclists should be insured, required to have some form of identification (i.e. number plates) and be subject to a 20 mph speed limit. There was an interesting article in the Daily Mail by Melissa Kite on this subject. I quote from parts of it:

"The last time I rode my horse on the country lanes of Surrey, I nearly didn't come back. All thanks to a gang of cyclists. Only a few steps from the gate of the stable yard, a racing club in formation swarmed downhill towards me, spread across the lane. As poor Darcy began to panic, I screamed: 'No, please!'

But they kept on coming. The bikes swirled around Darcy and suddenly she was spinning in circles – right into the path of a car behind me. I clung to her neck to stop myself falling, and saw the look on the driver's face. We were so close I think we both thought I was about to end up on the bonnet. To this day, Darcy trembles when she hears the faintest whoosh of a bike. Anyone prepared to hurtle past a woman clinging to the neck of a terrified horse is not safe to be on the roads unlicensed and uninsured.

Some cyclists flagrantly break the law: running red lights, ignoring pedestrian crossings, weaving in and out of lanes and mounting pavements.

As my experience shows, the situation is dire in the countryside, where weekend cycling clubs are increasingly using the

public roads as a racing track. And it's not just the accidents they cause. It's their anti-social behaviour. The atmosphere in many once-genteel areas has been ruined by the arrogant mentality of cyclists, hurtling along with selfish aggression".

Comment: There is certainly a big problem in London and other major UK cities. Cyclists ignore red lights and do not give way to pedestrians. Modern bikes enable cyclists to exceed safe speeds and their brakes are not fit for purpose. If they are involved in an accident, as they often are, they can ride away as they know there is no way of tracing them.

It has been suggested in the past that registration of cyclists or cycles would be expensive and not justified by the benefits.

Continued on next page.



Cycling (Cont.)

But a modern electronic registration system would not be expensive and a small number plate not difficult to affix to bikes. It should not put off anyone from cycling.

Tougher laws about cycling behaviour would also be welcomed by many people. Riding on pavements is a major problem which pedestrians heartily dislike and now that we have users of electric scooters doing the same we need a review of laws in this area.

Unfortunately many cyclists now think they are competing in a race against other cyclists and this has been encouraged by the promotion of cycling events. Organised events on public roads should be banned.



It used to have a 40 mph speed limit now reduced to 20 mph. The scheme as introduced has created a lot of unnecessary traffic congestion when the number of cyclists using the cycle lane is very small.

In reality a small number of cyclists are being favoured while thousands of vehicle users are being prejudiced.

Note: the latest email from Fraser MacDonald, Strategic Consultations Lead at TfL, does not contain his contact information. This is symptomatic of the approach of TfL management who do not want to receive any feedback on their statements. Appallingly undemocratic.

Photo above is of Park Lane opposite Stanhope Gate in the August Bank Holiday week from a TfL camera showing a queue of slow-moving traffic in mid-



Park Lane Cycle Lane To Be Made Permanent?

We have received an email from TfL concerning the Park Lane scheme which was introduced in

morning. Totally unnecessary but due to the road being reduced to one lane.

Electric Cars More Expensive to Run

The conventional wisdom is that although electric cars are more expensive to buy, they are cheaper to run. The cost of electricity, particularly if you charge at home, means a lower cost per mile travelled in comparison with buying diesel or petrol.

But an interesting article in the Daily Telegraph has debunked that assumption.

2020 as an emergency response to the Covid epidemic. The latest email tries to justify making the scheme permanent and says "there is a strong case for less motor traffic and more space for walking and cycling along Park Lane including at Hyde Park Corner and Marble Arch".

It rejects the argument that cyclists can ride through the park because that is "inconvenient for people on foot using the park...". It looks like TfL have already made up their mind to make the scheme permanent although they do say there will be another public consultation in the autumn.

Comment: Park Lane is a key route for north-south traffic in London and has always been a major road.



They say that as the unit cost of electricity will nearly double under the new energy price cap as a result it will cost more to travel in an electric car than a petrol one. They compared the cost of running a Jaguar i-PACE, and electric SUV, with the equivalent Jaguar f-PACE, a petrol driven version. To cover 400 miles the electric version would cost £99 more to travel the same distance. Likewise a Kia e-Niro would cost £88 more than a Kia Sportage.

With electric models often costing twice as much as petrol versions, you can see that there is a big financial disincentive to buying an electric vehicle (a Jaguar i-PACE is 66% more expensive than an f-PACE).

Continued on next page.



Electric Cars (Cont.)

The main difference is of course the battery cost and they are not coming down in price as rapidly as expected mainly due to the demand for lithium.

Comment: As the overall carbon cost of an electric vehicle during its lifetime, including construction and scrapping costs, is little lower than that of a diesel/petrol vehicle one has to be a committed green fanatic to ignore the economics.

The better solution if you want to minimise emissions, particularly in cities, is probably to buy a self-charging hybrid such as the Toyota Yaris Hybrid – starting price £20,500 (Note: the Prius is no longer made but Toyota now have several hybrid models).

People buying new cars when we near 2030, after which sales of pure diesel/petrol cars will be banned, will need to consider the costs carefully and whether to anticipate the ban.

Number Plate Cloning

With the introduction of the ULEZ across much of London, the practice of cloning car number plates to save money has grown rapidly. According to an analysis by Fleetpoint, based on TfL data comparing April 2021 with April 2022, there was an alarming rise of 857% in cloning. Cloning a vehicle number plate is relatively easy and if you drive a popular car model you may find it wise to mark your vehicle near the number plates so that it can be differentiated from any clone. Otherwise you may find it difficult to prove it was not you when a PCN is issued.

Greenwich Transport Policy – Have Your Say

The London Borough of Greenwich is conducting a public consultation on future transport policies using the Commonplace platform. To quote: “The council has ambitious plans to make the borough greener, healthier and more connected, with a particular focus on how walking, cycling and public transport can be improved”.

They say this in the published Transport Strategy document: “Having declared a climate emergency in June of 2019, this strategy supports the Royal Borough’s goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030 and supporting a green post-pandemic recovery.”



Transport is the second biggest source of emissions in the borough. The Royal Borough has recognised that to become carbon neutral it is necessary to work to: a) reduce the number of journeys made by polluting motor vehicles, and b) enable people to walk, cycle and use public transport wherever possible”.

In other words, the use of vehicles will be attacked in the name of addressing the climate emergency. Is there a climate emergency and will reducing vehicles make any difference to the climate? The simple answer to both those questions is NO.



Just because we have had a slightly hotter and dryer period of weather this summer does not mean there is a climate emergency and emissions by vehicles in Greenwich cannot have any significant impact on the climate even if you accept that carbon

emissions might be influencing the climate.

The whole of the UK produces less than 1% of worldwide emissions so any reduction in Greenwich alone will have a negligible impact.

In reality this is just another unnecessary and unwelcome attack on the use of cars.

How do they propose to discourage vehicles?

Continued on next page.



Greenwich (Cont.)

By introducing more Controlled Parking Zones (CPZs), more Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) and more School Streets they hope to discourage vehicle use.

Reading the detailed report shows how Greenwich is failing to meet the Mayor's targets for active travel, improving road safety and reducing emissions – see page 26. A particularly telling statistic is that the percentage of people killed and seriously injured (KSI) in collisions in Greenwich is on average lower compared to adjacent boroughs but a high proportion of such collisions are made up of people who are cycling (17%). Given that people cycling in the borough makes up less than 2% of the mode share, this demonstrates how dangerous cycling is in reality.

Was there any consultation with councillors or the Chislehurst Society before these were installed? I am not currently aware of any.

I have campaigned against the use of speed humps for many years. You can read all about the negative aspects of them on this web page: <https://tinyurl.com/mpea6b7r>

Postscript: I complained to recently elected Councillor Mike Jack about these humps. After trying to justify the humps he said "I 100% support the council decision to use speed humps in this situation". Note that he and the other Chislehurst Matters candidates campaigned on the basis that the previous Chislehurst councillors did not listen to the electorate or failed to take action. But it seems nothing has changed in that regard.

Make sure you respond to this consultation by going here: <https://tinyurl.com/44webehv>

Meanwhile Mayor Sadiq Khan has committed to spend £4million on making London a greener and more climate resilient city despite him being desperately short of money to keep TfL afloat. This includes funding more LTNs in Hackney and Enfield but it will also include rain gardens and tree pits (rain gardens might replace parking spaces and help to absorb excess rainfall which we are not exactly overwhelmed with this year).

Planting more trees and generally greening the environment may be welcomed but spending more money on non-essential projects at this time of economic difficulty is surely unwise.

More details on the Mayor's expenditure here: <https://tinyurl.com/3ymja4pd>

Speed Humps Come to Chislehurst

New speed humps have appeared in the Chislehurst High Street Car Park—see photograph below. Such humps are exceedingly painful to people with back pain complaints, of which there are a great number.

As Bromley Council have an adopted policy of a preference for non-vertical deflection traffic calming schemes I am very surprised that these humps have been installed. I would guess they have been installed to stop wheelies and other motorised ASB in this car park, no doubt to the annoyance of local residents, but I am not sure they will stop that anyway. Why has the Council ignored its own policy?



These humps are not sinusoidal in profile which is recommended to minimise discomfort but simple rubber/plastic ones screwed onto the surface. Cheap and nasty in reality.



Roger Lawson



now beloved by local councils but many people have difficulty paying that way for various reasons. It does not help that different councils use different systems and other car park operators can also offer different systems. So

you can turn up at a new location and find you have to waste minutes downloading a new App and recording credit card information.

As the Guardian article says: “All summer, exasperated motorists have been jabbing at their phones, trying to download and install yet another parking app.

Then follows the interminable chore of entering card details and number plate, which may

ultimately be derailed by poor phone signal or a glitchy app”.

But Councils say using Pay By Phone saves the authority money and reduces incidents of vandalism and theft at pay machines.

Comment: It might save local councils money but it causes great inconvenience to motorists. The ability to pay using cash should be preserved. It’s just another attack on the use of cars by making life difficult for their users.

Guardian article here: <https://tinyurl.com/4fp28yvp>

Roger Lawson

Postscript. When the above article was posted on our blog and tweeted it received a large number of comments. Clearly this is an issue of concern to many people.



Pay By Phone Parking – Simply Inconvenient

The Guardian have published an interesting article on the problems of pay by phone parking instead of the use of cash machines. The former are

For example some 60,000 wildlife accidents happen in Sweden each year and collisions with elk are particularly dangerous. But such a system would no doubt be helpful elsewhere.

Corrections

Editor: An article in our last edition on School Streets in Bromley incorrectly attributed some remarks at a Council Meeting to Councillor Rowlands when it should have referred to Councillor Bennett.

Also in that edition it mentioned the number of TfL staff earning over £100,000 as being 6000 when it should have been 600. It’s still a roidiculously high number.



Volvo Laser Sensors

Volvo have announced that they intend to install laser sensors (lidar) in all future models. That will include the upcoming electric version of the XC90 (photo

above). Lidar will give warning of obstructions ahead sooner than a human driver can see in the dark even with the best headlamps and can see “a black tyre on a black road at 120m ahead or a pedestrian a 250m” according to Volvo chief Jim Rowan. This might be of particular use to drivers in Scandinavia.



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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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