

ABD London News

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Editorial

This edition contains two main stories—on the degradation of the London road network by new cycle superhighways, and the battle over 20 mph zones.

In the latter case, politicians don't seem to be interested in listening to the evidence that there is little or no benefit in 20 mph sign only schemes—simply enormous cost. They don't even want to wait for the result of a study commissioned by the Department of Transport into the benefits or otherwise of such schemes.

I recently asked a resident of Brighton what the impact of their 20mph scheme had been. He said none because everyone ignored it.

You can see the same on the streets of the City of London any day if you care to visit it. In essence the promotion of 20 mph zones is a new religion where faith outguns rational analysis.

As regards the cycle superhighway proposals, I would urge you to contact your GLA Member, and your local M.P. to protest about these plans. They will be enormously damaging to the road network and were one of the reasons why taxi drivers recently blockaded central London in protest.

Only recently published by the Mayor is a "Transport Emissions Roadmap" (available on the web) which includes proposals for work place parking, emission based permit parking and road user pricing in London. Yes this from a Mayor who got elected based on opposition to these kind of things. I remember even if he does not. But perhaps his mind is concentrated more on moving to Westminster as an M.P. of late. Is it not this kind of behaviour by Conservative (and Labour) politicians that surely is giving UKIP golden opportunities to exploit?

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Quotes of the Month

"Our latest analysis shows the proposals would mean longer journey times for motorists and bus, coach and taxi passengers along most of the route..."... TfL on the new East-West Cycle Superhighway—see page 2.

"I want people to feel the street is their home, not just when they get through the front door".... Croydon Councillor Kathy Bee—see page 4.

"The fact that proponents of 20mph zones continue to campaign for their introduction despite increases in accidents suggests that the ultimate aim of reducing speed limits is to discourage driving rather than making the roads safer".... Sean Corker in an ABD press release.

"These [parking] fines are not only a serious waste of money by TfL but also show that too many TfL staff believe in the mantra of do as I say, not as I do when it comes to traffic enforcement".... Caroline Pidgeon, GLA Member—see item on page 7.

East-West Cycle Super- highway

Most of our newsletter readers will have received a note previously on the proposed new East-West and North-South Cycle Superhighways (it's now on our web site here: [East-West-CS](#)). The East-West route is particularly problematic and you were of course urged to object to a scheme that will destroy one of London's main thoroughfares.

Firstly, just to make it clear how congested the route between Tower Hill and Westminster normally is, to the right and below are photographs taken at 3.30 and 3.45 p.m. on the 10th September (i.e. before the rush hour had even started). Now one of the two lanes on this road are going to be turned into a dedicated cycle lane, so congestion will obviously worsen.



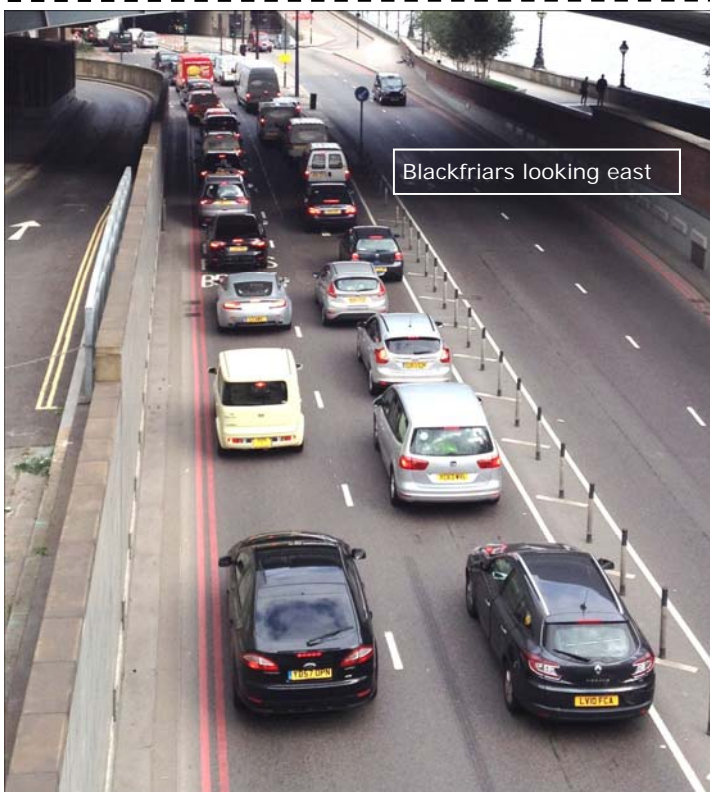
Tower Hill looking west

By how much? Transport for London (TfL) have now published their forecasts. In summary on the route from Tower Hill to Hyde Park Corner it will take 47% longer for most traffic (that's an extra 16 minutes) in the a.m. period and 45% more (13.5 minutes) in the p.m. period. See [Timings](#) for the full data.

If you have not already done so please make sure you object to these proposals. You can submit your comments by clicking on the link below to go to the on-line consultation:

[East-West CS](#)

Just say no!



Blackfriars looking east

Just to highlight how misleading the public consultation is, below are a couple of impressions from it showing how traffic may flow under the scheme—a totally unrealistic view to anyone who knows that route.



Superhighways and Super Sewers

The Alliance of British Drivers takes a pretty dim view of the proposals for the East-West Cycle Superhighway. This will remove one of the two traffic lanes (each way) for most of the route from Westminster to Tower Hill via the Embankment. And now we learn that after putting in the cycle superhighway (at some undisclosed enormous cost) it is very likely they will have to dig it up a year later to put in the new London sewer under the Embankment according to a report in the London Evening Standard.

The fact that TfL are apparently rejecting any suggestion that the cycle superhighway be postponed so these works could be co-ordinated just beggars belief.

This route along the Embankment and Upper/Lower Thames Street is one of the most congested major arteries in London and it is a key route for road traffic - not just private cars which are relatively few but for buses, HGVs, LGVs and taxis. As a result it is also one of the worst hot spots for air pollution in London. Reducing it to one lane and then effectively making traffic flow even worse by construction works over many months just shows the disregard of Transport for London (TfL) for road users other than cyclists.

The rush to move the cycle superhighway forward without proper consultation and no cost/benefit analysis suggests that Boris Johnson is keen to make it a fait accompli before he departs as Mayor.

Perhaps he is worried that his replacement won't be such a keen fan of cycling to ignore the rational objections to this scheme and give it more consideration.

Moving the superhighway further north where it would have much less impact, would be one good idea. The ABD supports the creation of separate cycle lanes but not when it is at the expense of other road traffic and other people.

North-South Cycle Superhighway

If you think the additional congestion from the East-West Cycle Superhighway will be bad, just consider the additional journey times imposed on the North-South route. According to TfL modelling, this will increase journey times on the Stamford St to Queen Victoria St northbound in the a.m. period by 12 minutes—that's a **three fold increase**.

Neither do these "model times" indicate which "a.m." and "p.m." periods are being used in the calculation. Are they rush hour times or an average of all times? Obviously in off-peak periods the impact of additional congestion will be much less, so these suggested times may be misleading.

To object to the North-South Cycle Superhighway, click on this link:

[North-South CS](#)

There are also proposals to substantially improve Cycle Superhighway 2 between Aldgate and Bow. This is of course a notoriously dangerous route for cyclists where there have been several recent fatal and serious injuries. This Cycle Superhighway was installed in some haste apparently with the detail design poorly thought out. So it probably needs improving. Whether the changes are sensible the ABD has yet to take a view on—let us know if you have any comments.



Go to [CycleSuperhighway2](#) for more details. An artists impression of the new scheme is shown above.

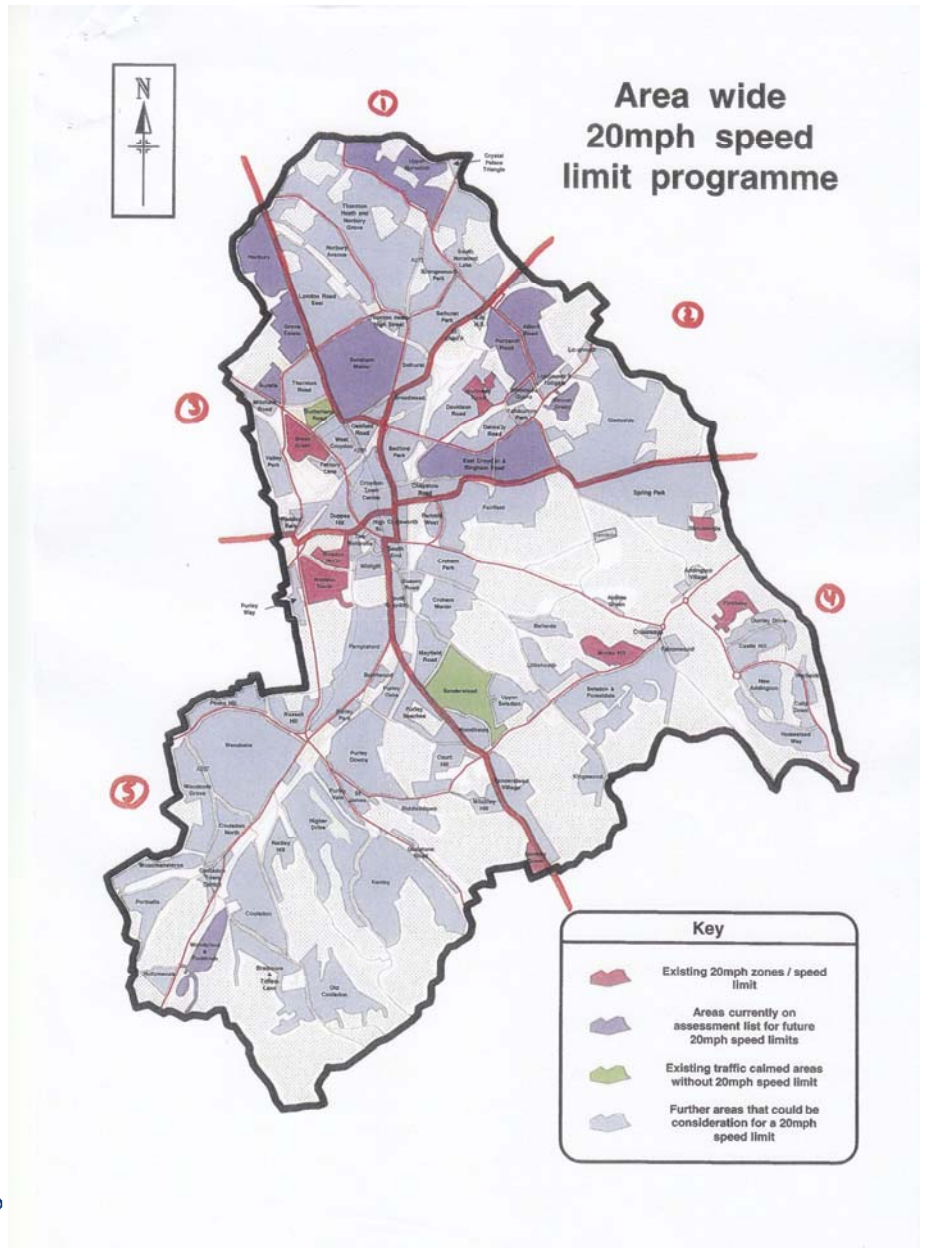
Croydon aims for blanket 20 mph limits

The following is an article by Croydon resident Peter Morgan on the new councils plans for wide-area 20mph zones:

Under the new Labour administration, Croydon Council has announced plans that would see almost all roads in the borough subject to a 20mph limit – see map to the right. Only a few main roads (marked in red) would be left with their current limit of 30mph – a very few have 40mph limits.

The council say “*The principal aims of any 20mph speed limit are to improve road safety, discourage through traffic, encourage walking and cycling, make a positive contribution to improving health and tackling obesity and improve the quality of life and the local environment.*”

The Cabinet Member Cllr Bee said the limits went beyond road safety.



She wants pedestrians to feel like they own their streets. “Whose roads are they?” she said. “In the past there was the assumption that roads were about cars and we need to address that imbalance and give people their roads back.”

However the available evidence points to different conclusions. In fact boroughs with lots of traffic calming and 20mph limits do no better than ones that have few or none – Here’s an extract from a report available from the author:

The table on the right compares the deaths, KSIs and all casualties over a variety of London boroughs with different levels of traffic calming in the last few years. It will be seen that there is very little difference in the figures for both KSIs and all casualties, with in fact

Levels of traffic calming	Reduction for		
	Deaths	KSIs	All
Low	36.69%	58.91%	39.24%
Moderate	49.85%	58.89%	38.63%
High	39.95%	54.15%	35.34%

the correlation being the reverse of what is generally claimed. Despite these figures being so close, they are statistically significant (i.e. there is enough data to be reasonably sure that this is not a fluke).

Continued on next page



Croydon 20 mph limits (Continued)

Of course, correlation does not prove causality, but this at least reliably refutes the claim that widespread traffic calming and 20mph zones produce above-average reductions in KSI rates, and if anything the reverse is true once usage becomes widespread.

When we come to vague claims that a 20mph limit would get people to walk and cycle more, and so tackle obesity and improve air quality, it becomes clear that this 20mph campaign is really a political project reminiscent of the War on the Motorist.

The police have made clear that there would be minimal enforcement of 20mph limits.

Many would say:

- There is NO NEED for widespread 20mph limits.
- It will make little if any difference to road safety.
- It will make driving a slow frustrating miserable experience.
- It will put up costs with longer slower journeys - think of buses and taxis.
- Pollution from exhaust and noise will get worse.
- There are better ways to spend money to make the roads safer.

Conditions for a 20mph limit in a road should be:

1. There is a good road safety case for that road;
2. Residents in the road really want the 20mph limit;
3. It would meet in an acceptable way the wider views and needs of traffic needing to use that road.

The council plan to divide the borough into 5 areas and have a token consultation for the whole area.

We need a consultation pack delivered to every home in Croydon, and a proper referendum counted road by road, with the following questions:

I want there to be a 20mph limit in my street?

Which street do you live in?

I want there to be 20mph speed limits in other streets in Croydon?

Which other streets in Croydon would you like to have 20mph limits?

Do you have any other comments about the council's plans to introduce 20mph in Croydon?

For more information or to support a campaign against these proposals please contact Peter Morgan at:

info@sayno20.org.uk



An ePetition has also been created making the above points. If you live in the Croydon area, work in it or travel through it, please go to this web page to view the petition and sign it:

<http://tinyurl.com/oy6rqv7>

Editor: There is a lot more information on the futility of 20-mph zones on the London ABD web site here:

www.freedomfordrivers.org/Road_Safety.htm and here:

www.fairdealforthemotorist.org.uk/20tooslow.htm

Incidentally I attended a "Scrutiny" Committee Meeting at Croydon Council on the 16th September. It was clear that Labour councillors were committed to wide area sign-only 20

mph zones before the meeting even started so there was no proper consideration of the available evidence.

Indeed the report from council officers contained no references to any cost/benefit analysis and it was obvious that councillors were keen to spend several hundreds of thousands of pounds of taxpayers money regardless simply because it was an election manifesto commitment to introduce such a policy.

I spoke at the meeting to point out that if you spend money on ineffective road safety schemes, then you are not spending it on effective ones. With limited budgets you need to spend the money where it is most effective.

Another titbit of information that came out of the meeting was that the council are considering a permit parking charge scheme that varies charges based on the size of car. This sounds very much like the "Emission based permit parking" scheme tried in the London borough of Richmond that proved so unpopular (and resulted eventually in the LibDems losing control of that council after many years).

Labour councillors in Croydon have yet to learn the lesson of being in power. Namely that if you don't listen to residents but put dogma before common sense then you may not be in power for long.





Air Quality

The Greater London Authority have published a report on air quality in London under the title "Comparison of Air Quality in London with a Number of World and European Cities" - you can find it on the web.

London comes out as average on many of the measures versus other large cities. Vancouver was rated as the city with the best air quality, with Cairo and Mumbai the worst. Stockholm is the best in the EU.

What does this show? Primarily that cities with cool, wet and windy climates do well, while those with hot, dry climates do badly.

Mayor Boris Johnson hailed the fact that London ranked 9th out of 36 world and European cities on the "health" index.

But Boris still came in under fire from left wing and environmental groups for not doing enough in London.

That's despite the fact that his ULEZ (Ultra Low Emission Zone) proposals will be draconian in the extreme—at least that's by the time he has left London and hopefully has taken a seat in Parliament which he has already taken steps to line up.



"Dear Mr Lawson

I note that you have misrepresented my position regarding Mobile CCTV.

Your magazine and your 'right' to do so I guess, but for the record the sum of money you refer to [£80,000] would be the loss in revenue suffered by the Council were it to continue to operate the CCTV fleet only servicing the areas indicatively marked as being excluded from the ban by HMG.

We don't have the money to run the fleet at a loss, so it will almost certainly be mothballed completely, until such time as this ill considered policy is reversed and cancelled as it will be.

Ironically, with a total ban, the loss would 'only' be £15k.

*Yours sincerely
Cllr Colin Smith"*

Editors Comments: My original article focussed on the fact the revenue raising capability of such vehicles (i.e. their economics) seemed to take precedence over any consideration of other issues such as whether other more traditional enforcement procedures could be used, whether issuing tickets via cameras at a later date, rather than on the spot, was sound, whether it was an infringement of privacy to have constant monitoring by cameras, and whether the safety issues justified it.

Parking Camera Enforcement



Our last edition contained an article on the possible Government banning of the use of mobile camera cars to enforce parking restrictions, although it has been suggested there would be some "exceptions" such as outside schools or on bus lanes.

Your editor reported on a meeting of Bromley council where I noted that Councillor Colin Smith suggested that the loss of revenue would be a serious matter. Incidentally the same comment was made at the Croydon council meeting mentioned elsewhere in this edition.

Councillor Smith has asked us to publish the following letter:



The ultimate question, based on Councillor Smith's comments, is whether residents would like to see the mobile camera cars scrapped altogether and force the council to raise the lost £15,000 via other means to enable them to support other transport programmes (such as the Freedom Pass that they have to pay for).

Only residents of Bromley could decide that matter, but perhaps the council should ask them? Personally I think all forms of camera enforcement (fixed or mobile) should be banned.



Miscellaneous News

- TfL have announced plans for a scheme to remove the gyratory road system in Wandsworth town centre. They actually forecast journey time savings for general traffic and buses passengers. The cost is forecast to be £67m, but most of the benefits come from “ambience” improvements. How that is evaluated is not clear.

- The Queens Circus roundabout, also in the Borough of Wandsworth, is to be redeveloped. It will be the first roundabout in London to segregate cyclists. See artists impression above.



No road space has been taken from other traffic because the centre of the roundabout has been reduced in size.

- TfL is to fund a £30m improvement to the Croydon Tramlink even though it sold off operating the existing network to First Group.



- The Government is looking into a scheme to finance the scrapping of older diesel vehicles so as to improve air quality. Boris Johnson is keen on the idea for London where pollution from diesel vehicles is a major and growing problem. Even the Sun newspaper has been campaigning for it.

Editor's comments: I certainly think this is worth looking into, if it is a cost effective solution to the problem. I look forward to changing my recently purchased diesel car in a couple of year's time, helped by Government funding! I actually found it difficult not to buy a diesel vehicle on the grounds of initial and running costs when I last purchased, so incentives to promote the sale and purchase of petrol vehicles should also be introduced by adjusting fuel and other taxes.

- TfL have rejected calls to increase the time allowed for pedestrians to cross signal controlled pedestrian crossings. The timings are set based on a 1.2 metres per second walking time which was assumed many years ago, but there is also an additional “blackout” period in which pedestrians can complete the trip.

Editor's comments: this has come up as an issue in Chislehurst High Street of late but however slowly I walk I can cross before the lights turn to green to waiting traffic. It seems that pedestrians assume they must cross while the lights facing them are green, but that is not the case.

- The new “toll-free” Dartford Crossing system is now to come into effect in late November.

- Transport for London (TfL) has paid out £170,000 in parking fines in the last four years to local London Boroughs. This was discovered as a result of a Freedom of Information Act request by the Politics.co.uk web site.

Editor's comments: This surely demonstrates how difficult it is for people to comply with parking and traffic regulations when even those who should know better break the rules. It seems the majority of these fines were collected when TfL staff parked outside stations or in bus lanes to carry out some work—but a lot of people could use that excuse no doubt.





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

Address Changes

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

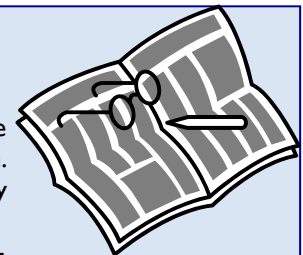
About the Alliance of British Drivers (ABD)

The Alliance of British Drivers was formed from a merger of the Association of British Drivers and the Drivers Alliance. The ABD is the leading 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 tolls and road usage charging. We also campaign for more enlightened road safety policies. The Alliance is a "not for profit" voluntary organisation which is financially supported primarily by its individual members. More information on the ABD is available from our web site at www.abd.org.uk

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Note that the ABD maintains a list of members who are familiar with individual London boroughs and may be able to help with information on local issues in those boroughs. The current list is to the right.	Les Alden	Southwark	LHA@looksouth.net
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This Newsletter is published by the London Region of the Alliance of British (A.B.D.), PO Box 62, Chislehurst, Kent, BR7 5YB and is distributed free of charge to ABD Members in the London area and to anyone else who has an interest in traffic and transport issues in London. All material contained herein is Copyright of the A.B.D. or of the respective authors and may only be reproduced with permission. Any opinions expressed herein are solely those of the author of the article or that of the Editor which do not necessarily represent the official policies of the A.B.D.



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