

ABD London News

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

In this Edition

- Travel in London—It's Changing
- Mayor's Transport Budget
- Backlash Against 20mph in Hammer-smith & Fulham
- More Congestion in the City
- Are Cyclists Racing on London's Streets?
- HGVs and Cycle Safety
- The Latest Accident on Chislehurst Commons
- Accident Statistics—An Inconvenient Truth
- Cycle Superhighway on the A40 Westway
- Castles in the Air, or Tunnels under London?
- Cars to be Included in the LEZ?
- ABD Press Release on Speed Cameras
- Quietways Consultations

See the last page for publisher and contact information.

Editorial

The first two articles in this edition demonstrate exactly what has been happening to the transport network of London over the last 15 years.

The degradation of the road network was commenced by car hater Ken Livingstone who seemed to cram TfL with cycling enthusiasts. If they do not cycle to work, TfL staff use public transport because they typically work in central London so one can see why they are not sympathetic to road users.

These policies continued under Boris Johnson and became even more extreme in favour of cycling despite the hope we might have respite from such policies when the electorate rejected Livingstone.

Boris did not mention his enthusiasm for cycling and what he intended to do in his election platforms, and there has been minimal public consultation on these policies. Although we get hundreds of public consultation

documents issued every year now from TfL, they tend to be about how the proposals are to be implemented in detail, not whether they should be taken forward at all. Any cost/benefit analysis is now rarely provided, indeed you are lucky if you even see the costs of schemes provided.

TfL has not changed from being an undemocratic, unelected body that decides what is best for you and involves nobody but their own staff and urban planning experts (who claim to know what is good for us) when drawing up their strategic plans.

Will this change under any new Mayor? It seems unlikely. The two main party candidates appear to be promising much the same as exists at present (although Goldsmith's transport policies are particularly sketchy). It is a pity there are no better alternatives.

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Quotes of the Month

"I don't know what the world is coming to. Wherever you go, you don't".....
The late Terry Wogan commenting on London traffic.

"What are you supposed to do when there is no driver? You can't make eye contact with anyone"... Jerry Kaplan quoted in the Financial Times on the recent accident involving a Google driverless cars, and "road etiquette".

"Without quite meaning to, London has lost a third of its road space over 15 years. Honey, we shrank the transport system". Ben Rogers, director of Centre for London and urban planning expert—see article on page 2.



Travel In London— It's Changing

A report that should be essential reading for everyone who has to travel around the London metropolis has recently been published by Transport for London (TfL). It's called "Travel in London - Report 8"—see cover photo to the right. It shows how transport in London has been changing, partly as a result of the growth in population, partly from attempts to encourage cycling and "modal shift" in general, and from the impact of a buoyant economy. Here's a brief summary of the contents, with some comments.

The population of London grew to a record 8.6 million people in 2015, the highest point since 1939. In 2014 total trips rose to 26.6 million in the average day - that's 8% more than in 2008, and 2% more than the previous year. In other words, travel has been showing strong growth in London.

This is thought to reflect population growth and economic trends, but the increase in traffic has brought pressure to bear as congestion rises from reduced road space and other causes.

As the document says:
"....effective network capacity for general traffic continued to be reallocated to other MTS (Mayors Transport Strategy) priorities". I think they mean changes to accommodate more cyclists, more bus lanes, removal of gyratories in the name of road safety and similar such measures.

There is however a trend for falling private car use, but rising use of public transport and more cycling and walking. As it says **"a feat unprecedented in any major city"**, driven by "consistent policies". The population of London is expected to continue to grow rapidly, but will feature more older people.

About half of all bus journeys in England are now made in London - an unbelievable figure which demonstrates just how much they are subsidised. But bus patronage has levelled off in recent years because of "a similar trend in service supply", i.e. fewer buses are being run as subsidies have been slightly reduced so the consumption falls to put it in plain English.

London Underground, DLR and Overground rail services likewise show strong growth.

There was a sharp 13% increase in average traffic delay in 2014 according to the report, which won't surprise anyone who has to drive in London - and that does not even reflect the changes made since the start of 2015.

The number of licensed taxis has remained stable, but the number of private hire vehicles (minicabs) has risen sharply - up by 19% in the latest year alone. That has had a significant impact on traffic congestion of course.



The additional capacity on these lines supported the growth.

Road traffic has fallen for much of the last decade, but has increased in the last two years. For example traffic volumes were up by 3.4% in central London in the most recent year, and 1.9% in outer London.



Cycling levels rose by 10.3% between 2013 and 2014, and walking has risen but only by the same trend as population growth. There could soon be more people commuting into central London by bike than by car, but that change is much less noticeable in the outer London boroughs.

There are positive trends in CO2, PM10 and NOX emissions (a lot of which come from transport vehicles) reflecting initiatives to improve local air quality.

Continued on next page.



Travel In London (Cont.)

Comment: this report shows the impact that Boris Johnson's policies have been having on transport in London. Basically more people cycling, with cars discouraged by reductions in road capacity.

Cycling has also been encouraged by sharp increases in public transport fares which have been rising faster than inflation making it one of the most expensive cities in the world for public transport - unless of course you are one of those who hold a Freedom pass where your travel

is subsidised by the rest of the population for reasons which this writer finds difficult to understand. Originally introduced by the Greater London Council in 1973, it has remained a financial millstone around the necks of London boroughs even though the GLA was subsequently abolished by Margaret Thatcher.

Encouraging more cycling has had some unintended consequences because it is one of the less safe modes of transport, particularly when you get a lot of new, inexperienced cyclists on the roads or those who like to "pedal furiously" as is now a frequent sight on the roads of London.

The end result is demands for more measures to improve the safety of cyclists, which can be very expensive.

Are all these changes of benefit?

You might not think so if you are one of those increasing numbers of older people who are not able or willing to cycle. It seems unfortunate that Londoners have never really been asked what they would like as public consultations on these matters have been low key and certainly the cost/benefit of all these changes have never been spelled out. But it seems unlikely that this will be a debating topic for the competing Mayoral candidates.

Mayor's Transport Budget

When you wish to see what is happening in London, and what the priorities for transport will be in future, one of the key documents to look at is the Mayor of London's Transport Budget. His new budget for 2016/2017 has just been published. Here are a few comments on it:

Improving bus journey reliability is a key objective. But guess what, bus journey times have been negatively impacted by the "Road Modernisation Plan" (which includes on-going "improvements" to a number of major road junctions and lots of cycle lanes which have removed road space). As a result "bus mitigation schemes" are required. What does that mean? Probably a lot more bus lanes in essence.

The Road Modernisation Plan is actually costing £4 billion although some of that will apparently go on improving or maintaining existing assets - such as strengthening the Hammersmith Flyover and upgrading the Fore Street tunnel. It will also include "transformational" projects to replace the Wandsworth town centre gyratory, the Vauxhall Cross Gyratory, and projects for the Euston Road, King's Cross, Highbury Corner and Croydon Fiveways.

For cycling projects there will be £913 million spent through to 2021/2022 which includes the Cycle Superhighways, a number of "Quietways" (cycle routes on minor roads) and numerous smaller projects.

Money will be spent on replacing obsolete wet film speed cameras by digital cameras (amount to be spent not declared), on financing 20 mph schemes, and a trial of "mandatory Intelligent Speed

Assistance" (note the rebranding from the former "Intelligent Speed Adaptation"!).

You can see the real priorities by looking at the proposed split of the capital expenditure budget for 2016/2017. This is £1,673m (47%) on Rail and Underground, £1,299m (36%) on Crossrail, £435m (12%) on Surface Transport, with the balance of 5% on "Corporate" (the latter includes commercial development and ticketing projects). In other words, the road network is yet again to be starved of funding in comparison with rail and underground projects despite the road network being used for many more journeys (counting bus trips, private cars, cycling, etc). Indeed if you consider the expenditure on cycling and buses alone, there is surely not much left for other improvements to the road network.

So now you know where the money goes.



Backlash Against 20mph in Hammersmith & Fulham

The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham (LBHF) went Labour in 2014. Last year, it proposed to push 20mph limits on all borough-managed roads. In spite of a propaganda blitz – 80,000 glossy promotional booklets sent to businesses and homes - only 45% of consultation responses supported it.

See the links at the end for updates.

Looking more widely, some councillors seem to just give in to the slightest pressure from the 20mph lobby and with funds for implementation being provided by TfL, will be tempted to push ahead. They are not expecting organised opposition from residents.

However, there is often a strong case against. It can be based on local casualty statistics not indicating speed is a particular factor or the Police's reluctance to enforce 20mph limits. The latter might indicate a council goes for 'self-enforcement' – which can take the form of a glut of speed bumps disfiguring an area.

The matter should have ended there, but LBHF used creative accounting to claim a majority for 20mph on every road!

Despite facing better-resourced opposition, ABD's leafleting drive tipped the vote against to 55%. Talking to local people, it became clear that opposition was far deeper - hardly anyone supported the proposal, and reactions against it were often quite strong!

A formal decision on going ahead should have been made in January. It has twice been deferred after a second leafleting campaign exposing what was a biased consultation and LBHF's unwillingness to respect the majority against.

Response to a simple A5 leaflet has been very good, with 94% of representations to the Council leader and Cabinet member for transport against the proposal.

It can also be pointed out that the 'money from TfL' comes from residents' council tax bills, and could be better saved to reduce future bills, used for meaningful road safety measures or just to keep bus and tube fares down.

Future costs will have to be met by the council, though, for things like monitoring, maintenance and even compensation for damage by speed bumps, so it is not 'free'.

It may well be worth taking a stand, particularly if a council is less than popular, or if the ruling party has a small majority.

Links for more information:

Some residents also volunteered to give out copies or at least email a PDF version to their friends. There was also a backlash from the Licensed Taxi Drivers' Association, the London Cab Drivers Club and the RMT union cabbies' section, local service and delivery firms.

After being inundated with complaints, LBHF has just released a scaled-down proposal. However official correspondence passed on by residents raises serious questions.

How LBHF can claim both to be 'listening' (and thus going for less than full borough-wide 20mph) with other assurances that borough-wide 20mph is 'a manifesto commitment' and 'will be going ahead'? Both can only be true if it is intending to go ahead with some roads first and the remaining ones later?



<http://bit.ly/1GBt5DD>,
<http://bit.ly/1lyGjHT>,
<http://bit.ly/1OiX3Tz>

Brian Mooney

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Enforcement of 20 Mph speed limits.

Editor: Many people are under the impression that the police will not enforce 20 mph speed limits. That is not the case. Here is a quotation from a recent minute of a meeting of the City of London Corporation: "*The City of London Police representative informed the Committee that 128 drivers were prosecuted in November and 74% of these were low end speeders.*" (the whole of the City is now a 20 mph limit).

More Congestion in the City

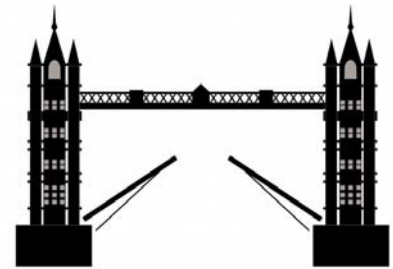
We have covered the worsening congestion in the City of London arising from the works around Aldgate and the impact of the new Cycle Superhighways during 2015 in previous newsletters. But it is going to get worse in 2016.

There will in addition be major works that will close the junction of Aldgate, Leadenhall Street and Fenchurch Street requiring that all three roads be closed from January to April.

In addition Tower Bridge will be closed to "re-deck" the bascules (the raising part of the road surface). This is likely to take place in Q4 2016 and will require traffic on the inner ring road to be diverted via the Congestion Charge zone to use Southwark or London Bridges.

The end of 2016 will almost certainly see a closure of Bank junction.

Note that the Highways Team in the City of London Corporation now have their own Facebook page.



See <https://www.facebook.com/Squarehighways>, and they also have a Twitter feed so you can easily give them your comments on these and other news items.

There is one thing for certain in 2016 - road users will find life more difficult in the City.

Are Cyclists Racing on London's Streets?

Are cyclists racing against each other on London's streets? This was a question raised in a letter to the Daily Telegraph on 29/12/2015 by Gareth Hayton following previous letters about speeding cyclists putting pedestrians at risk. His answer was yes because he said if you go to the internet and search for "Strava segment Embankment" it shows you that cyclists are recording their times on the stretch of road along the Embankment from the City to the West End (part of the www.strava.com web site).

The "winner" in the Men's category at the time of writing is Tom Moses with a time of 3 minutes and 9 seconds which it gives as an average speed of 58.7 kph (i.e. 31.7 miles per hour).

Apart from the fact that there are several traffic lights and pedestrian crossings on that stretch of road, clearly Mr Moses is exceeding the 30 mph speed limit along that road.

These timings can be recorded automatically by mobile phone apps or GPS products and there are large numbers of recordings being submitted - for example there are 247,000 records on the Westminster to Millbank segment of the same road.

As the writer to the Telegraph said "*Many cyclists are racing, not just on roads, but on paths and tracks throughout the country every day, with complete disregard to others*". This activity is of course illegal. Cycle races of any kind have to be authorised by the police, and speed limits are obviously being broken.



Note also that "cycling furiously" is a criminal offence under the 1847 Town Police Clauses Act or under the Offences Against the Person Act 1861 and there have been past cases prosecuted under those laws.

So if you wonder why cyclists are often the source of accidents to both themselves and others, now you know.

They may be competing to get into the record books!

HGVs and Cycle Safety

Transport for London (TfL) are consulting on a proposed new regulation to require lorries to have additional side windows.

This is what it says: *"At present, lorries are currently only required to have a window on the upper section of the passenger-side door. This makes it difficult for drivers to have a direct view of pedestrians and cyclists who are near to the front left hand side of their lorry.*

We propose that the fitting of vision panels in passenger-side doors, wherever they can be fitted, should become the mandatory standard for lorries operating in London.

The Freight Transport Association questioned the legality of the proposal, claiming lorry cab design was governed by EU regulations.

They also said that a side panel can easily be obscured (for example by another occupant of the cab) and there was already encouragement for additional mirrors, cameras and sensors that may be better solutions.

They prefer wholly redesigned cabs with financial incentives to adopt them.

Note that this public consultation has now closed. TfL are now issuing many consultations on almost a daily basis, and we try to cover the important ones in our blog (see p.6) as our newsletters are somewhat infrequent. You can see all TfL consultations on their consultation "hub".

Fitting an additional clear window panel to the lower section of the passenger-side door gives drivers a better, direct view of adjacent cyclists and pedestrians."

The consultation also says: *"Lorries are disproportionately involved in fatal collisions with pedestrians and cyclists.*

Between 2010 and 2014, lorries were almost 10 times more likely to be involved in a fatal collision than cars; Seven of the nine cyclist fatalities in London in 2015 have involved lorries; 79 per cent of fatal collisions with cyclists in the past three years have involved lorries designed to be driven off-road".

Clearly there is a problem here that should be tackled.

But it is surely wrong to propose regulations for vehicles in London that differ from the rest of the country.

This should be done by national regulation, not local regulation as vehicles can obviously travel long distances and if all cities introduced different regulations it would cause enormous confusion and lead to poor compliance. However meritorious the proposal, the strident demands of cyclists in London should not dictate how this measure is implemented.

As usual with consultations from TfL of late, there is no information provided on the likely cost of these proposals (i.e. the burden on lorry operators), or a simple cost/benefit analysis.



The Latest Accident on Chislehurst Commons

A recent week saw yet another accident at the white spot roundabout in the centre of Chislehurst Commons (on Centre Common Road) - see the aftermath in the photo.

This junction has been the scene of numerous accidents over the years, some involving serious injury. Typically vehicles approach from two right angle directions at the same time and one does not give way to the other - indeed it seems likely they do not see the other vehicle or recognise it is a junction. Several attempts have been made by Bromley Council to rearrange



the approach roads, and signage, but nothing has worked. The only real solution is surely to remove the junction by revising the road layout over the Commons. This indeed is part of a proposal from the Council which is under discussion with the Commons Trustees whose permission is required for any changes but they seem reluctant to support it even though they would gain more "green" space. The latest accident even involved a Transport for London (TfL) vehicle as can be seen which might help to get their support for finance to tackle this issue.

Accident Statistics - An Inconvenient Truth

A very good analysis of the road traffic accident data in London is present on this web page: http://www.londonbusroutes.net/miscellaneous/Accident_trends.htm. It has only recently been brought to your editor's attention but it is definitely worth reading if you care about road traffic casualties.

It tackles the question of whether traffic calming, and in particular 20 mph speed limits, have the benefits claimed or are cost effective. One table in the report which I reproduce below is based on an analysis of the accident reductions in different boroughs with differing levels of traffic calming (it gives all the underlying data based on TfL figures if you want to check out your own London borough):

Level of traffic calming	Reduction for		
	Deaths	KSIs	All
Low	42.21%	62.32%	38.71%
Moderate	53.54%	62.01%	37.11%
High	43.97%	57.07%	33.49%

As the report says, the correlation is the reverse of that normally claimed. It notes they are statistically significant although correlation does not necessarily imply causation.

The author of the report apparently has a keen interest in buses (most of his web site is about bus routes in the capital), and also says that most of his travel is by rail. So this is not the normal profile of a person who opposes traffic calming - indeed he seems most concerned about the delays to buses from wide area 20 mph schemes. But it is a very intelligent analysis of some of the issues and well worth reading.

Cycle Super-highway on the A40 Westway

A public consultation has been launched on the part of the East-West Cycle Superhighway that is to run along the A40 road (from Paddington to Acton) - that includes a segregated cycle lane on the elevated section of the Westway (see graphic right).

One lane of the Westway heading east will effectively be removed and converted into a cycle lane for use in both directions. The proposals will have an impact on journey times for vehicles based on TfLs modelling. Some routes in certain directions and certain times will improve, while others will get worse.

Of particular concern is that the journey from Gypsy Corner to Westbourne Bridge could be 4-6 minutes slower, and the trips between Holland Park Roundabout and the Paddington area in the morning peak could be 8 to 10 minutes slower, with long queues resulting. However TfL say they are investigating a number of measures to reduce the delay and the scheme will not go ahead unless it is reduced.

Road users affected should make sure they respond to the consultation which is available on the web.

London Taxi Drivers Lose Challenge

Note that the London Taxi Drivers Association lost their



case for a Judicial Review that they had applied for of the Cycle Superhighways. That application was on the basis that they required Planning Permission which had not been obtained. But the judge considering the case did not support their arguments. It is surely unfortunate that a project that has been so damaging to traffic movements in London, and of course has undermined the livelihoods of taxi drivers, has been allowed to proceed without proper legal scrutiny or intervention by the national Government.

Castles in the Air, or Tunnels under London?

Boris Johnson has proposed two new east-west tunnels under London to reduce congestion by up to 20 per cent. With the population of London still growing rapidly, and measures such as the cycle superhighways reducing road space for vehicles on key east-west routes, the Mayor of London invited TfL (Transport for London) to look into using tunnels to relieve congestion last year.

TfL have suggested that two major routes be examined in detail - one running from the A40 at Park Royal in the west to the A12 at Hackney Wick in the east,

and one running from the A4 at Chiswick to the A13 in Beckton. In addition there are proposals for "flyunders" at various locations such as on the A13 at Barking and to replace the Hammersmith flyover.

The Mayor is calling for the Government to divert some of the Vehicle Excise Duty they collect from Londoners (about £500 million per year) to help finance these schemes.

Comment: After managing to seriously damage the road network of London during his time as Mayor (by removing road space in favour of cyclists, removing gyratory schemes that actually helped traffic flows, and lots of other minor degradations such as closing roads) he is leaving this as a parting shot to

his electorate before moving onto higher things. Will such major investments in cross-London tunnels actually happen in your or my lifetime? It seems exceedingly unlikely from the past experience of long term planning in London. Tunnels have been used successfully in Boston, USA and in cities in Scandinavia but they are exceedingly expensive. We certainly have the technology to build such tunnels now relatively quickly, as is apparent from the Crossrail project, but is it likely that the idea for tunnels will be pursued by his successor as Mayor? With the two main candidates competing on their "environmental" credentials, it seems unlikely they will work hard to obtain the required funding even if they were advised to take on these projects.

Cars to be included in LEZ?

According to an article in Local Transport Today (LTT), a working group of TfL and local boroughs are developing plans to extend the types of vehicles that are included in the Low Emission Zone (LEZ) that is currently focussed on commercial vehicles to include some cars from 2023 (such as older diesel cars). This will help to meet EU air pollution standards. In addition they are looking at options for 2025 that might include a zero emission standard for vehicles within the existing congestion charge zone and tighter standards for vehicles within the North/South Circular. But if the UK votes for Brexit in the referendum, then we will be able to ignore the EU diktats on pollution levels—problem solved!



Change of Phone Number

Please note that the ABD London's phone number has changed to 020-8295-0378 with immediate effect.



Follow the Blog

The ABD London region now has a blog so many of the articles herein first appeared there. The address is:

<https://abdlondon.wordpress.com/>

Please take a look at it and post your comments on the articles there (or of course send an email to the editor). Note that articles on topical news will be posted there first although they will still continue to be summarised in this newsletter.

You can register to "follow" the blog so you get notified of any new articles as soon as they appear.

Contributed articles to the blog are also welcomed.

ABD Press Release on Speed Cameras

The Alliance of British Drivers have published a press release on the latest evidence concerning the effectiveness of speed cameras.

It highlights analyses of the claims for speed camera benefits in London, the Thames Valley and Wales which contradict the claims made for their effectiveness. There are also doubts about their use in Scotland and a wider scale study by Idris Francis, a well known campaigner against cameras, is about to be published. Here is a brief extract from the press release giving the comments of the ABD:

"The response of the authorities and other vested interests to soundly-based criticisms that their claims were clearly nonsense has certainly been consistent. Since the first official reports from 2002 onwards, they have sought to bury their heads in the sand - in the hope that the damning and mounting evidence that cameras are useless for road safety purposes will simply go away.

Given how very lucrative are speed cameras and their downstream operations; it is hardly surprising that Camera Partnerships and other financially-involved, vested interest groups continue to systematically and cynically misrepresent the reporting of casualty data trends and the effects on them of speed cameras.

The emerging evidence clearly shows that speed cameras are nothing less than a monumental waste of a very great deal of money - that ought to be put to better use elsewhere on: e.g., road and junction improvements, dualling etc."

Those who promote the benefits of speed cameras, and continue to advocate more expenditure on them, as has happened in London of late, should surely study this data more carefully. Regrettably those who make decisions on these matters often seem to have closed minds and have little background in the science required to make sense of the data.

See the link in the box below for more information:

<https://twitter.com/TheABD/status/703714480400830465/photo/1>

Quietways Consultations

Some of the recent public consultations by TfL have been on "Quietways". Those are cycle routes across London that use routes with relatively light traffic and on which some road engineering measures such as cycle lanes are being implemented.

But not everyone is happy. This is what one local resident had to say on the Quietway 7 cycle route (Elephant & Castle to Crystal Palace) running through West Dulwich and Gipsy Hill:

"The proposed changes represent the perfect storm of incompetent political appointees, biased zealot non-resident lobbyists, scared spineless

council appointees, local political lemmings and a misguided public.

It will all result in political nitwits 1 - London residents 0.

I've been challenging the whole concept for 3 years.

Boris has unleashed a monster into the urban transport planning for the next 20 years.

Boris is a politician who can't see beyond the next election.

Sustrans, chosen by Boris to engineer the London cycle-ways, is the most unqualified consultant to professional, safe, even handed and efficient urban transport planning as anyone could find in the World!

Sustrans are cycling lobbyists, unrequited anti-vehicular advocates and untrained traffic engineers, who are now charged with refitting London's streets to accommodate cyclists."

This is what Andrew Gilligan, London Cycling Commissioner, was quoted as saying on this topic in LTT:

"We have had some complaints from stakeholders...as well about the consultations that it has conducted. In Dulwich, for instance, there was quite a lot of unnecessary "aggro" about what was proposed. Actually, what is proposed is pretty modest in Dulwich and people had the idea it was not".





Registering to Receive This Newsletter

This newsletter is free of charge and is sent approximately bi-monthly to anyone who cares to request a copy. It is sent via email (as a link to a web page from which you can download it). To register for a free copy simply go to this web page: 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

Contact and Publisher Information

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. The ABD London Region also publishes a blog which can be found here: <https://abdlondon.wordpress.com/>



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