

ABD London News

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Editorial

This is a bumper edition to give you some summer reading material. There is of course a lot to discuss with the Mayor's Transport Strategy being published and much public debate on how to tackle air pollution both in London and nationally.

Traffic congestion is certainly a contributory factor although speed bumps also make it worse (I did three BBC interviews in one day on that topic recently).

Congestion is symptomatic of a worsening transport network which is reflected in the latest news on national trends in trips/distances travelled. Trips have remained constant since the nineteen seventies but distance travelled rose then fell back in more recent years.

The average annual mileage of private cars fell from 9,200 miles in 2002 to 7,800 miles in 2016.

It's just got more difficult to travel, and not just by car. Hence the rise of "non-travel" as reported on in our last edition.

In London another indicator of the same is that Congestion Charge income is down 10% on last year. Volumes of vehicles paying the charge have declined, put off no doubt by the worsening congestion.

What's the ultimate cause? Too many people in too small a country surely, with under-investment in the transport network.

Roger Lawson (Editor)



Quotes of the Month

"Merely implementing a lower [speed] restriction is unlikely to influence vehicle speeds to any great degree.... From an ethical perspective this....generally means that large numbers of motorists are criminalised for no particular road safety reason and risks undermining the credibility of speed limits"..... Tony Ciaburro and John Spencer of PACTS.

"Number of TfL workers being paid more than £100,000 grows to 515"..... Headline in the Evening Standard (28/6/2017).

"ABD supports legal action over the handling by Croydon Council of the objections to 20 mph speed limit proposals".....ABD letter to Croydon Council.

"Too many cycle superhighways were built at the same time and too quickly by the previous administration, putting unnecessary pressure on the central London road network".....Mayor Sadiq Khan to the Greater London Assembly.

"Run out of town: London motorists will pay-as-you-go and won't have anywhere to park". Headline in the Sun on the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) - see page 2.



Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS)- An Attack on Private Transport with Dubious Economics

London Mayor Sadiq Khan published his draft Transport Strategy (MTS) on the 21st June. We promptly published some comments on our blog but here is a more detailed analysis:

The Mayor is concerned about "car dependency", an emotive phrase used to describe people's preference for private vehicle transport in some circumstances. **He plans to fix that by making the use of cars more and more difficult over the next few years. He is also going to fix our health problem (he claims) by getting people out of their cars and walking or cycling instead.**

The Mayor proposes to limit their numbers, and/or remove their exemption from the Congestion Charge.

As in the Livingstone era, we now have a Mayor who clearly hates cars – even zero emission ones. His target is to reduce car use and increase public transport use (the latter is currently 64% of all journeys in London, but his target is 80%). Indeed, if you are not using public transport he will be encouraging you to walk or cycle. And there will be more vehicle free zones and car-free days.

To further restrict car use, parking provision will be restricted in new developments or even be "car-free".



Or if they can't do that, by getting them to use public transport even though he admits that underground and surface rail is often grossly overcrowded and cannot be fixed in the short term.

Or of course you can travel by bus even though bus ridership has been falling as it is slow and unreliable (and getting worse).

The Mayor even suggests that the elderly and disabled are too dependent on car use, so they will have to face the same treatment.

Even Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) are subject to attack on the basis that they have made congestion worse due to the increase in their numbers.



Yes we could be back to the regime where inadequate parking provision in new housing developments creates excessive on-street parking.

In addition, access to kerb space (on street parking including permit parking) may be restricted or usage discouraged by pricing.

There is a target of a zero-emission transport system by 2050. But he wants to have zero emission zones in central London and the suburban town centres by 2025.

This means that unless you have an electric vehicle, it may be prohibitively expensive to drive around much of London in just a few years' time. That's much sooner than the vehicle population will change.

Pay-per-mile road pricing (as recently advocated by the EU) will be considered. Effectively replacing and extending the current "Congestion Tax" and emission taxes such as the ULEZ.

He will also allow local boroughs (there are 32 in London) to introduce congestion charging schemes so we could end up with a horrendous patchwork of restricted zones.

The Mayor repeats the claim that the Congestion Charge was a success in reducing congestion which is simply wrong – as the ABD has repeatedly said. The evidence is available on the ABD London web site.

Continued on next page.



Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) (Cont.)

How much will a new system cost and why will it reduce congestion are surely the questions to ask.

There will be more “bus priority measures” to improve bus journey times and reliability – **that means more bus lanes.** But the Mayor seems not to recognise that bus lanes are already present on most key routes and are an inefficient use of valuable road space.

What is the cost of the proposed strategy? The Mayor does not say, but it will be clearly very expensive.

- In addition, he is asking that revenue from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) be “devolved to TfL”. That would include “powers to change how VED is levied” which means the Mayor could set the charge rate for London residents presumably, or charge it in a different way to an annual fee, i.e. based on a new road pricing model.

Needless to point out that these proposals would give the Mayor the ability to build a financial empire and dictate the lives of Londoners much more extensively than at present. Such wide ranging and sweeping financial powers for someone who, once elected, has dictatorial powers is surely inappropriate.

However one looks at this, the financial plans look likely to be very dubious indeed.

Transport for London (TfL) have been evading even answering simple questions on the finances of the ULEZ scheme, and there is no cost/benefit analysis provided on the Mayor's latest proposals, as with so many recent TfL schemes.

The Mayor even goes so far as to claim in the MTS document that public transport fare payers subsidise motorists. This is simply a lie.

It is both inaccurate and grossly misleading. Public transport fare payers do not subsidise anyone. They are subsidised themselves from local and national taxation. Motorists pay much more in taxes than is spent on the provision of roads. On a national basis, and in London, they subsidise public transport users, not the other way around.

That hole can only be fixed by more taxation on Londoners as it seems unlikely central Government would wish to help.

Many of the London's transport problems are being caused by the rapid growth in population, which the Mayor is happy to let continue – indeed to promote. But such growth increases air pollution.

It is interesting to look at the graphics that accompany the words of the Mayor's vision (see example on the previous page).

Barely a private car in sight, and no LGVs, with roads just full of cyclists and buses. And no congestion of course which we all know is totally unrealistic bearing in mind the projected population growth.

It is very obvious from the contents of the MTS and the result of past promises by the Mayor (partly to help get elected no doubt) that TfL faces major budget problems. The Mayor proposes how to fix that though. He is asking for:

- Revenue raising powers. (Note: the Congestion Charge and ULEZ proposals are not technically revenue raising regulations even though they have turned into a tax on motorists—in practice they have been distorted to perform that function). The Mayor is asking for more powers to raise tax than they alone provide.

- A development rights auction model on major infrastructure projects. This expands the ability to obtain funding from developers (at present only covered by Section 106 agreements).



He expects more people to move to public transport when he concedes 71% of London Underground will be overcrowded in future in the rush hour and national rail and buses will not be much better, unless action is taken.

The document reports that there is already severe overcrowding on some tube lines, as users know.

As usual, the advocates of public transport simply ignore the unpleasantness and overcrowding of public transport even though the Mayor concedes that is a problem. Anyone who has travelled on it in London in the recent hot weather will know just how obnoxious it is.

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Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) (Cont.)

Until air-conditioning, larger seats and capacity to avoid standing is provided (an impossible dream cost-wise of course), I for one will be ignoring the Mayor's exhortations unless they are unavoidable.

In summary, the Mayor's Transport Strategy contains not only a number of glaring defects, but is yet another missed opportunity to develop an integrated transport strategy. London has needed an improved road transport network for many years, but there is nothing in the document to support that.

It is mainly about attacks on private vehicle owners and users (including PHVs).

This is of course a common approach by Mayors, and their advisory staff in TfL, who live and work in central London. They simply do not understand the problems faced by residents of the outer London boroughs.

The Mayor also seems keen to bully us into living a healthier life style. But how one travels should be a matter of personal choice and it is not at all obvious how moving people onto overcrowded public transport will significantly assist.

To get Londoners to be more active should be more about education than dictatorship.

The freedom of individuals to choose their transport mode should not be constrained.

An even fuller analysis of the MTS is available from below.

Readers have until 2nd October to object to the proposals.

The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) is supporting a campaign which has been launched against the Mayor's proposals. For more information and an easy way to make your feelings known, please click on the link below.

PLEASE RESPOND NOW!

If you wish to help with this campaign (for example by delivering leaflets in your local area), please contact me on 020-8295-0378.

Roger Lawson

MTS Campaign Support Site:

<http://www.cantpaywontpay.london/>

Mayor's Transport Strategy—The Full Analysis:

<http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/Analysis-of-Mayors-Transport-Strategy.pdf>

Forcing Implementation of the MTS

An article in the latest edition of Local Transport Today (LTT) made interesting reading. It reported on how London boroughs will be in the "frontline to deliver Khan's traffic reduction goal".

As readers may be aware, local boroughs in London have control over local roads, but they have to produce a "Local Implementation Plan" (LIP) to show how they are going to follow the Mayor's Transport Plan.

Each borough has to submit their LIPs by October 2018 at the latest and they have to be approved by Transport for London (TfL).

The boroughs have been issued with guidance on how to write their LIP, and Valerie Shawcross, Deputy Mayor for Transport has said in the foreword that "*Traffic reduction should be a central theme of borough LIPs, with the aim of creating pleasant places for residents of every part of the city. This means providing alternatives to car use, discouraging unnecessary trips, looking at how street space is used most efficiently, supporting car-free lifestyles, and taking action to reduce and re-time freight trips.*"

Now we all know what "discouraging unnecessary trips" implies. It means that journeys that you consider worth taking may not be by some bureaucrat in TfL.

In other words, your freedom to choose when and how you travel are going to be constrained if the Mayor has his way.

And comments such as "looking at how street space is used" surely suggests it could be reallocated as we have seen so much of in the last few years in central London – road space reallocated to cyclists and pedestrians from vehicles.

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Forcing Implementation of the MTS (Cont.)

Most funding for new transport schemes in local boroughs are funded by TfL because they have the tax resources and central Government funding while local boroughs have very small transport budgets from their own cash resources. Such funding from TfL has historically been focussed on certain “streams” that they consider priorities, although there was some local discretionary funding.

This is what it says for example in the Interim Guidance from TfL: *“In line with the Healthy Streets Approach, a new Liveable Neighbourhoods programme will replace the LIP Major Schemes*

programme to deliver transformational improvements in walking and cycling provision, road safety and road danger reduction and mode shift from private car use”.

There will also be more money for bus priority measures (i.e. bus lanes), cycling and air quality programmes. In addition, the LIP guidance suggests that TfL will be working more closely than in the past in preparation of the LIPs. Does that mean they are going to provide more support, or simply want to ensure they toe the line? If you are in any doubt, it also suggests that TfL will be providing more services to deliver major projects within boroughs – and that includes design and traffic modelling or even “construction oversight”.

It would appear that there will be even more interference in local boroughs in local traffic and road safety schemes by TfL than ever before.

This is despite the fact that TfL do not have the local knowledge that is required to develop good schemes – even local boroughs often do not know as much as local residents about road network issues.

Will there be resistance from local boroughs to these plans? Perhaps. But it shows why it is so important to get the proposals in the Mayor’s Transport Strategy kicked into the long grass.

TfL continue to wish to impose a centralised, dictatorial manifesto on local boroughs and take even more control over their activities and funding. This writer thinks it should be opposed.

R.W.L.



Transport Costs in London – A Begging Letter from the Mayor

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has recently published a document entitled “Transport Expenditure in London” (from the GLA Economics Current Issues Note 54).

It claims to be an analysis of how much money is spent on transport in London in comparison with other parts of the country. But in reality it repeatedly argues that London needs more.

Unfortunately, the facts presented, which is useful information in many ways, actually tend to show that London is already very well funded as regards rail transport, but that the road system has been neglected of late. Here are some of the key points from the document:

It says *“Comparing regions based on how much transport expenditure they receive on its own or on a per head basis does not properly account for the need or demand for transport”* (page 2 of the report).

It suggests that rather than using a “per head” basis, it should be on a “per user” basis and proceeds to say:

“On this basis, the amount spent on railways per passenger

journey and the amount spent on roads per 1 million vehicle miles in London were one of the lowest among the GB regions.”

Now there are of course many more “commuters” who travel into London by train and other public transport on a daily basis than you get in the other major UK cities, let alone in the more rural areas.

In addition many of these journeys in London involved multiple stages, i.e. separate trips, including changes of mode, which they are probably counting as separate journeys because they are otherwise difficult to measure. So they are selecting a measure that favours their argument.

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Transport Costs in London (Cont.)

In addition, they say that “In particular, London has seen the largest decline in road expenditure per 1 million vehicle miles since 2007-08”. Well one can quite believe that when London has had minimal expenditure on roads while cities like Birmingham have greatly improved their road networks in recent years.

They do point out that the number of passengers using public transport in London at peak hours far exceeds that of other major cities but their table of numbers of trips by mode shows that almost as many get made by car as by bus/tram and they are more than double those by rail.

Page 25 of the report also gives a useful breakdown of “Sources of Funding for Transport for London”. Some 47% comes from fares, 25% from central Government grants (i.e. out of taxes), 17% from borrowing, and 11% from “other income” (that would include the Congestion and LEZ charges). So Londoners get a subsidy equivalent to 53% for public transport. But this report argues Londoners pay proportionally more for its own infrastructure investments in comparison to other regions.

The recently published Mayor’s Transport Strategy argued that public transport users subsidise car drivers. On the data contained in this report, that is clearly nonsense. Public transport users are massively subsidised and the Mayor is asking for even more.

Mr Khan wants to change that of course, and the Mayor, and his cycling mad predecessor, have been increasing the number of cycle trips but they are still a small fraction of those by other modes (see page 9).

The report gives some figures on public sector expenditure by region, and London receives 29% of all of it, plus another 11% is spent in the South-East. The North-West is the next biggest at 11%. This just shows how much more subsidies, both capital and current expenditure, is spent in London and the South-East than the rest of the country – but the Mayor would like even more! See page 12.

In terms of expenditure per head, London is about twice as high as any other region and amounts to about £981 in 2015-2016 per head.

To look at this a different way, the expenditure per passenger journey on the railways in London was approximately £6.94 in 2015-16. Bearing in mind that most rail trips within London probably cost less than £7 you can see how massive these subsidies are (i.e. more than 100%).

The rest of Great Britain gets even bigger rail subsidies per trip at £10.30, but one has to bear in mind that many such trips would be much longer and more expensive.

In terms of road expenditure per region per user, London is relatively high but Scotland is even higher (see page 21).

But London’s has been declining and has “one of the lowest spends per vehicle mile in Great Britain”.



New Web Site

The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) has a dedicated web site to cover news and issues in the London area. It is present at www.freedomfordrivers.org (the name simply indicating that drivers in London are corralled and penalised in a total unreasonable manner by unnecessary restrictions, reductions in road space, and excessive charges – they definitely need liberating).

We have just launched a new version of the web site which is more modern in appearance and easier to use. The old one was developed many years ago and a rewrite was well overdue. The new site still links to many of the old pages which will take some time to update but most of

the key pages are already revamped. Screenshot is below.

Please let us have any comments you may have on the new web site or additional coverage you would like included. The web site is a valuable archive of information and resources for anyone interested in traffic and transport issues in London.



Barriers on London Bridges

As a safety measure, subsequent to the recent terrorist attacks, steel and concrete barriers have been erected on several London Bridges to separate the roadway from the pavements. These are on Westminster Bridge, Waterloo Bridge, Lambeth Bridge, London Bridge and on part of Tower Bridge.

Perhaps most interesting is that there were actually metal railings protecting pedestrians on some of these bridges before 2010 when Boris Johnson, Mayor at the time, removed them. He considered them ugly.

This was part of a general policy to remove pedestrian guard rails by Transport for London.

Cyclists are complaining that the new “bollards” on Blackfriars Bridge at the ends of the bridge are causing congestion and delays to cyclists. A similar problem is on London Bridge where cyclists previously often mounted the pavement when vehicles became congested at the northern end.

This has clearly been a rushed response to the threat posed by copycat terrorist attacks, particularly when one bears in mind that there are many other streets in



London where dense crowds of pedestrians would be vulnerable to such attacks.

The long-term answer may be to simply put back all those traditional pedestrian guard rails which may have had little benefit in road safety terms and were frustrating for pedestrians, but might assist with this problem.

Most Drivers Ignore 20 MPH Speed Limits

A new report from the Department for Transport (DfT) shows that the vast majority of drivers ignore 20 MPH speed limits. A survey of nine sites across the UK showed that 81% of drivers exceeded the 20 MPH speed limit in the report entitled “Speed Compliance Statistics”. This might explain why the impact on average speeds by introducing signed only 20 limits is negligible as reported in a later article in this newsletter, or that the impact on actual accident statistics as reported in many such zones is also not apparent.

The DfT report also notes the common failure to comply with the 70 limit on motorways,

although compliance with other speed limits seems to have slightly improved. There has, of course, been wide calls for an increase in the motorway limit which was also supported by the ABD.

Surely the message here is that imposing unrealistic limits tends to be ignored by drivers. The ABD has always supported setting speed limits at the 85th percentile of free-flowing traffic speeds so that only those drivers who are clearly not adhering to what most drivers perceive as “reasonable” are potentially penalised for breaking the law. In addition, it has been shown in other studies that setting the limit in that way is likely to be safer than artificially reducing the limit.

So those London boroughs who are dogmatically introducing 20 limits everywhere (such as Lewisham and Croydon) should

take note. The hundreds of thousands of pounds they have spent introducing such “signed only” limits is a waste of money that would have been much better spent on other road safety initiatives. But regrettably those who have signed up to the religion of lower speed limits seem immune to listening to reason and to understanding the facts.

Note though that interpreting the data in the Speed Compliance Statistics report needs some care and it is worth reading the report itself. Average speeds in 20 and 30 mph zones are actually reasonably compliant particularly bearing in mind that roads were sampled where there was free flowing traffic, no traffic calming measures were in place and no nearby hazards such as junctions.



20MPH Zone Impact on Traffic Speed? Not Much

What's the impact of putting up 20MPH speed limit signs? Minimal according to a report from the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham.

A report on traffic speeds after the introduction of wide-area 20 mph speed limits comparing measured traffic speeds in 2015 and 2017 showed an average reduction of just 1.3%.

Across 100 comparable roads, the 85th percentile reduced from 24.83 mph to 24.52 mph.

Although some roads showed bigger reductions in speed, others actually showed substantial increases. But the data is difficult to interpret because those with the highest increases reported low speeds in 2015 while those with the biggest reductions reported high speeds in 2015. It's possible these are statistical anomalies resulting from inadequate sample sizes. Is there any data on accident impact? Too early to report apparently. But the Council is pushing ahead regardless with extending 20mph to all remaining side roads in the borough and on some sections of main roads.

Comment: This surely demonstrates that the likely benefits of such schemes do not justify the cost. The money would be much better spent on other road safety measures.

Follow the Blog

The ABD London region has a blog where many of the articles herein first appeared. It is present here:

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

Please post your comments on the articles there (or of course send an email to the editor).

Note that articles on topical news are posted there first although they will continue to be summarised in this newsletter.

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

Media Coverage of Air Pollution and Electric Vehicles

With the Mayor of London's plans for the ULEZ, his new Transport Strategy and the Government about to publish their air quality plans for cities, the issue of air pollution has been getting a lot of media coverage of late.

The Evening Standard ran an article by David Williams on the 28th June headlined "**Don't punish the car drivers for air pollution when other causes are worse**". The article said that making motorists pay punitive charges will fail to achieve major cuts in London's pollution.

This is the argument put forward by campaign group FairFuelUK who say it is more about raising cash as the revenue raised is not ringfenced to tackling emissions or congestion. One cannot but agree with them.

They also suggest that politicians are aiming for the wrong target by focussing on private cars which contribute only 11% of NOX emissions when 16% comes from gas central heating, 14% from diesel machinery and a lot from LGVs. Other sources are air traffic, air conditioning and HGVs. They also complain that local authorities have failed to cope with particulates that are left on roads by tyres and brakes.

FairFuelUK are asking people to write to Michael Gove and Theresa Coffey on the prospective additional taxation of diesel cars while promoting alternative solutions.

For example, instead of an expensive diesel vehicle scrappage scheme they suggest retrofit devices can solve the problem on most vehicles. In addition, they push for the adoption of E10 fuel (an ethanol/petrol blend) which most cars can run on perfectly well and is widely available in other countries.

They also promote the use of additives to reduce diesel emissions as is mandated in Texas. This can cut NOX emissions by 67%, and reduce other pollutants also. It does seem there are a number of other possible solutions that would be both cheaper and more effective than taxing motorists or forcing them to replace their vehicles – as Sadiq Khan is doing in London.

Continued on next page.



Media Coverage of Air Pollution (Cont.)

In the Financial Times on the 8th July there was a good article by Neil Collins on the unforeseen consequences of the push for electric cars. It was headlined “**Electric cars are a pain in the wallet for those who don’t drive them**”, and it spelled out the wonders of such vehicles.

But the downside is the loss of fuel tax to the Government (£28 billion per year and rising), while electric vehicles are subsidised by the Government. In addition, there are major problems in developing the electricity supply

grid to cope with future demand.

Mr Collins said “The energy transfer at a busy filling station is about equivalent to the output of a mid-sized power station” and went on to explain the energy inefficiency of electric cars due to high distribution and storage costs. He noted that: “**Electric cars are gathering speed thanks to politics rather than economics**”.

This writer has so far avoided the lure of electric or hybrid vehicles simply because the economics did not stack up.

A Prius might work well for a high mileage Uber driver and “all-electric” vehicles have historically had problems of range, recharging time and cost. But they are getting better.

There were a couple of interesting articles in the Daily Telegraph on 13/7/2017. Firstly there was a report on the comments on parking revenues from AA President Edmund King. He said that local authorities are reducing their expenditure on road maintenance and street lights while increasing parking charges that normally help to finance them. Specifically, he said “**Far too often drivers are viewed by every level of government as wallets on wheels**”. How true that is. The Greater London Authority made the largest reduction in expenditure at £59.5 million, way ahead of the next largest of £6.2 million in North Yorkshire.

Another article was on the potential demand for electric power if the number of electric vehicles grows as expected.



Certainly in London the Mayor’s recent Transport Strategy document suggests that by 2050 most cars will be electric – at least they will be if the Mayor has his way. The Telegraph article suggested that this might add 30% to peak electric power demand, thus requiring the equivalent of five Hinkley Point C nuclear plants according to National Grid.

See publication entitled “Future Energy Scenarios” issued by National Grid. Even if people only charge their electric cars in off-peak periods, the additional demand could be very substantial.

But readers may be interested to know that I am planning ahead on this issue and recently had a test drive of a Tesla Model S (photo top right). A very impressive vehicle altogether and obviously getting near the point where electric vehicles are practical for most car drivers.

Somewhat expensive at present as it’s really aimed at the luxury car market, but Tesla announced the first production deliveries of the new Model 3 recently which will be substantially cheaper (not yet available in the UK).



One can see that in two or three years time, all-electric cars will be a viable proposition for most drivers, particularly if the costs come down as expected. Volvo have also announced that all their new models after 2019 will be electric or hybrid so you can see the way the wind is blowing.

But that still leaves the problem of generating all the extra electricity, particularly when the wind is not blowing and the sun is not out.

To meet the demand in the time-scale required might simply result in more cheap gas power stations, not nuclear. I am yet to be convinced that this migration to electric vehicles makes much environmental sense because of the inefficient energy conversion involved in comparison with a modern petrol engine. We might end up with more air pollution rather than less, although the Mayor of London will no doubt ensure its not on his patch.

R.W.L.

The Social Costs of Air Pollution

A very good paper on the costs of air pollution in the UK, and the costs likely to be imposed on the public by the proposed measures nationwide, particularly in London, has been produced by Neil Lock. It is entitled "The Social Costs of Air Pollution from Cars in the UK" and is available from the link below.

Mr Lock in his Conclusion to the note says the following: "If my figures are right, then on the specific issue of air pollution from cars in the UK, there may be a case for charging drivers of Euro 3 and perhaps Euro 4 diesel cars to enter certain very limited areas like central London.

There is no social cost case for any such charges for Euro 5 or 6 diesels, or for any petrol cars. There is a case for charging drivers of diesels, and of petrol cars which do not meet the latest standard, an amount equivalent to the social cost of the pollution they cause (excluding the part of the pollution from diesels which is the manufacturer's fault). There is no case for charging any more than this."

He also says: "It is high time, I think, for the good people of the UK and of the world to wake up. To see the deep green agenda for what it is. To reject it and its proponents. And to seek to set up in its place just measures based on good science, honesty and common sense."

The paper is well worth reading, particularly by those who live in London and who will be affected by Sadiq Khan's plans.

More technical data is available to support his case if you need it.

Mr Lock can be contacted at e-mail: neillock@aol.com. Mr Lock is a software consultant, with a degree in mathematics.

He lives in Surrey and drives a diesel car, which he says he would not have bought if he could have found a petrol one of the model he wanted at the time.



Paper: The Social Cost of Air Pollution by Neil Lock:
<http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/Social-Cost-Cars.pdf>

Diesel and Petrol Car Demonisation Unjustifiable

Bearing in mind the recent Government announcement that diesel and petrol driven cars will be banned by 2040, and the recent policy announcements by the Mayor of London on the ULEZ and his Transport Strategy, it's worth repeating what the Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) have said at the national level on this topic.

Here is a summary of their recent press release (note particularly their comments on air pollution and life expectancy in some London boroughs):

Diesel and Petrol Car Demonisation Scientifically Unjustifiable says ABD

So, diesel and petrol cars will no longer be on sale after 2040, politicians have decided. They would be well-advised to consult their electorate first. For decades now, whenever government wants to change (and invariably increase!) vehicle taxation, scientifically unsound diesel and petrol car emission scare stories have been periodically rolled out by tax-hungry politicians; and supported by useful-idiot eco-lobbyists who simply wish to curtail freedom and personal mobility.

The true situation is that car emissions - and indeed those of all major atmospheric pollutants - have been dramatically declining for the past four-and-a-half decades.

The main reason that we have city centre emissions hotspots is government's own anti-car policies.

Traffic speeds have plummeted to below walking-pace (typically boosting NOx & NO2 emissions by a factor of four times compared with free-flow levels) due to subtraction of road space to accommodate intermittently utilised bus- and cycle-lanes, traffic light phasing deliberately set to increase gating and a panoply of other ill-considered measures aimed at slowing, hindering and generally obstructing traffic flow.

All current car emissions scare-stories share a common thread: they are based on junk epidemiology studies.

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Diesel and Petrol Car Demonisation (Cont.)

These seek to exaggerate any tenuous connection between (declining) urban pollution levels (or proxies for them) and *predicted* mortality advancements amongst a very specific target group in the general population: one subject to chronically-degraded lung-function through genetic, occupational or lifestyle choices - or combinations of all three. These studies invariably exhibit very low correlation coefficients and extremely wide levels of uncertainty/ inaccuracy. Their value as predictive tools - as opposed to scare-story generators - is negligible.

Mortality advancement episodes are invariably precipitated by two very specific weather condition scenarios: very low humidity in combination with either: (a) very high-; or (b) very low, temperatures. There is a much stronger correlation between mortality advancement and the frequency of such weather events than there is with urban air pollution levels.

Amid all the urban emissions hype and hysteria, the scientifically-illiterate, sensationalist media have overlooked a colossal paradox: the boroughs of Chelsea, Kensington and Westminster - which boast amongst the highest (and rising) average life expectancy (and average income) figures in the United Kingdom - also have amongst the worst measured urban air pollution statistics.

The primary determinants of life expectancy in the UK remain income and consequent lifestyle choices. Given that UK urban air pollution has declined dramatically (and average life expectancies have steadily risen) year-on-year since the Clean Air Acts; and will continue to do so with continuing advances in technology, isn't it time the environmental lobby and cynical, vote-/ tax-rise chasing politicians laid off road users and focussed their attention elsewhere?

A recent BBC Science article reported that in Central London, only 5% of NOx comes from private diesel cars. Trucks, taxis and public transport represent an even greater proportion. Public transport hubs: e.g., railway and bus stations and Thames shipping are also major contributors.



However, 38% originated from commercial and domestic heating systems. Indeed, the overwhelming proportions of all the problem urban emissions: NO2, NOx, PM2.5s & PM10s arise from industry, commercial and domestic heating systems, plus "imported" emissions blown in from Europe. **So unless we are prepared to adopt a BANANA strategy: Ban Anything Near Anyone Near Anywhere: stop consuming, heating our homes and workplaces, ban all industry and all travel, scientifically and economically viable alternatives must be adopted.**

If politicians were really committed to improving urban air quality, they would immediately implement the five Action Points below.

1. Most importantly of all, reverse the pernicious traffic gating-, lane-subtraction-, public transport- and cycle-prioritisation policies that have brought traffic speeds in our major cities down to a staccato mix of stationary and walking pace progress - with consequent *completely avoidable* adverse emissions and urban air quality effects.
2. Invoke in the short term more targeted pursuit of the worst transport sector polluters; getting the highest emissions (mainly public transport & delivery) vehicles remediated or scrapped.
3. Persuade heating and transport fuel manufacturers to alter their refining processes; further purifying their products, yielding cleaner-burning versions which produce lower concentrations of NO2, NOx, PM2.5s, PM10s and SOx,

4. If, as is being constantly preached to us, the future is electric, Government must facilitate and fund the development of electric vehicles with an all-weather conditions range of between 350 and 700 miles, and a recharging time comparable to that required to refill a modern, liquid-fuelled car. Performance capabilities must also match that typically achievable by modern petrol and diesel cars.
5. Government must also provide the infrastructure investment for all UK private dwellings to have the facility to park off-road - and recharge - at least two electric vehicles per household resident at that dwelling.

But then government is only *really* committed to squeezing every last drop of tax revenue from road users - by fair means or (usually) foul.

H&F Air Quality Consultation and Surprising News

The London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham have produced an Air Quality Action Plan which is now open to public consultation. In summary, their proposals include:

- Launching an electric vehicle hiring scheme – with a year’s free membership for local people,
- Encouraging people to use electric vehicles by extending their network of charging bays,
- Fining drivers who leave their engines running unnecessarily
- Becoming the leading cycle-friendly borough in London with cycle quietways, cycle storage and cycle superhighways,
- Encouraging more walking by tackling congestion, traffic

speeds and by providing more greenery,

- Reducing fossil-fuel boilers by replacing them with ultra-low nitrogen oxide boilers and ensuring energy plants are regulated through the planning process.

Not too many surprises there apart from the last one perhaps. But in the detail of the plan there is some surprising information. For example, it shows that as regards the impact of road transport on PM10, some 76% of them come from tyre and brake wear rather than engine tailpipe emissions.

Even more noteworthy is a statement on page 13 that they estimate that by 2020 emissions from road transport will reduce so much that it is projected that domestic and commercial gas sources will become the largest contributor of NOX in the borough, relegating transport to second place.

So will Mayor Sadiq Khan penalise inefficient and older heating boilers soon by forcing users to upgrade them, or imposing “emission charges” on them in the same way he has done for older car users?

It would be rational if he did, and clearly much more needs to be done to suppress dust on London’s streets. It was interesting watching an old film recently on television, the Blue Lamp (set in 1950), which showed water being sprayed from tankers to do just that. Perhaps we should reintroduce them (does not the Mayor own some unused water cannon vehicles that have never been used since being purchased by Boris Johnson and could be adapted?). Other European cities use them. Or are they already being used in London but I don’t get up early enough to see them?

Local residents in H&F should submit some comments.



Follow Us On Twitter

You can now follow the ABD in London as we now have a dedicated Twitter account. Topical news will be issued there including links to new blog post as they appear. To follow us, go to:

https://twitter.com/Drivers_London

Or of course, look for **@Drivers_London**

This is another small step to move us more into the modern era in terms of communications to and from our supporters and anyone who wishes to be informed on transport issues in London.

A Plague of Bikes

You are probably familiar with the “Boris Bike” hire scheme sponsored by Santander in London. But there is new competition now in the form of Singapore start-up oBike. Instead of using “docking stations”, the bikes can be picked up and deposited anywhere by using a smart phone app to unlock and lock the bikes.

But Wandsworth borough council has seized more than 130 of the cycles and described them as a “yellow bike plague”.

It seems users have been simply depositing them anywhere and in some cases blocking pavements and causing other obstructions. It is a particular problem around Clapham Junction station.

A council spokesman said “It is rather naïve to simply dump thousands of bicycles on London’s streets without any warning or discussion beforehand”.

Another similar scheme from rival Mobike is scheduled to launch in Ealing in September.





Departure from the AA

The 31st July was the start of many people's holidays. But one company director is going to be taking a longer holiday than he expected.

The Executive Chairman of the AA Plc (AA.) Bob Mackenzie has gone. The announcement from the company said he "has been removed by the board....for gross misconduct, with immediate effect".

According to press reports, this arose from a fracas in a bar, although there is also a suggestion that he may be suffering from a mental illness.

Some newspapers just suggested it was a "Jeremy Clarkson moment".

The AA is an interesting organisation which provides breakdown cover and other services for many motorists.

Back in 1905, it was formed to warn drivers about speed traps. It later transmogrified into a commercial organisation when the members sold out. Now it is one of the largest operators of driver education programmes such as speed awareness courses under the AA DriveTech brand.

That has become a booming industry and more than a million drivers are now attending speed awareness courses each year.

This has resulted in the funding not just of commercial organisations such as the AA but more than £40 million per year goes to the police and local authorities.

For the first time in English law, it is now allegedly legal to pay the police to drop prosecutions – all you have to do is promise to attend such a course. There is no evidence that it has any benefit in road safety.

More information on this dubious practice is present here: <http://www.speed-awareness.org> (a campaign run by the ABD against it).

So you can see how in the case of the AA it has changed over the years from promoting the interests of motorists, to actually undermining their interests and extracting money from them.

The police are also now ignoring well established legal principles that they should not take money to waive prosecution and are perverting the course of justice. But you can see how financial incentives have been driving the evolution of this dubious new industry.

Lambeth Bridge and Waterloo Changes

Transport for London (TfL) are proposing to change the roundabouts at the north and south end of Lambeth Bridge to signalised junctions with traffic lights. This is to improve road safety but it will also provide more space for pedestrians. There will also be restrictions on right and left turns on some roads at each end of the bridge. There are a large number of accidents involving cyclists at these roundabouts. In addition, they are considering a 20 mph speed limit on the bridge.

The ABD have objected to this as unnecessary as no evidence is provided that there is a road safety problem or that it would cut accidents.

The impact on journey times (for both motor traffic and cyclists) seems mixed. You can see more details, including projections of how the new road layout will look, and respond to a public consultation on the proposals on the web.

TfL are also proposing to remove the roundabout at the south end of Waterloo Bridge (the IMAX one, between Stamford Street and York Road). They say it would create "a new, high-quality, traffic-free, green public space to become a focal point for Waterloo supporting the civic and cultural life of the area".

The impact on journey times for general traffic will be mixed although west bound from Stamford St to York Road will be substantially delayed. Even cyclists and bus passengers may experience extra delays. In the view of the ABD better proposals could have been developed to improve the environment at this major junction, without such negative impact on traffic flows.

And as usual nowadays with TfL consultations, there is no information provided on the cost, nor any cost/benefit analysis of either proposal.

You can obtain more information and respond to the public consultation on these proposals on the web.





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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: <http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/register.htm> and fill out the form 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.

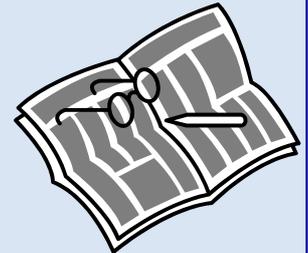
About the Alliance of British Drivers (ABD)

The Alliance of British Drivers (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 ABD London region web site at www.freedomfordrivers.org

Contact and Publisher Information

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<https://abdondon.wordpress.com/> or you can follow us on Twitter here: https://twitter.com/Drivers_London



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