

ABD London News

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Editorial

Firstly let me explain that we have skipped a month since the last edition even though there are lots of things going on in London because of the pressure of activity on our campaign against the Mayor's Transport Strategy. But we still met our bimonthly publication schedule.

We have had a lot of feedback from members of the public on the Mayor's Transport Strategy and our campaign opposing it. Only a very few people, mostly cyclists, seem to support the strategy. It is also remarkable the number of objections from ladies.

One perhaps could argue that the Mayor, Sadiq Khan, has brought this upon himself because women don't like to walk the streets or take public transport late at night which the Mayor seems keen for us all to do, rather than drive a car. Taking a Uber cab instead is something that will be impossible also if the Mayor has his way.

Women also often don't like to cycle, particularly when there are all those aggressive male cyclists, and car and van drivers on the roads of London.

Apart from those problems, the responses (which I hope to cover in more detail in our next edition), emphasise the irrationality of the Mayor's Transport Strategy and the attack on private liberty and choice.

You can read about our full response to the public consultation on page 4.

A common theme in several articles in this edition is the defective consultation process now followed by TfL, with grossly flattering photographs or artists impressions of current and future street scenes.

I hope that legal challenges will be pursued to stop this behaviour.

Roger Lawson (Editor)



Quotes of the Month

"Simply turning London into a track for cyclists fails to take into account the people who do not want, or are unable to live that way, in particular the elderly and disabled"..... Richard Massett of the LTDA on the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

"To lay the blame for the quality of London's air on passenger car drivers is a ponderous whopper of some magnitude".....Quentin Wilson—see article on page 4.

"This is an utterly disgraceful proposal thought out by people at TfL that clearly have never been down to Jamaica Road to see with their eyes the reality of the traffic".....Comment on proposals for Cycle Superhighway 4—see article on page 7.



Exhibition Road Accident

Eleven people were injured on 7/10/2017 in Exhibition Road, London, in what was at first thought to be a terrorist incident with a police response accordingly. But it now seems very likely to simply have been a road traffic accident.

Exhibition Road is a “shared space” scheme where the pedestrianised part of the road is indistinguishable from the vehicular carriageway. This is particularly problematic for a road where there are many tourists present who may not be familiar with traffic direction in London, or the road.

It is worth repeating an article that we published back in 2012 on the dangers of this road design:

The overall cost of this scheme was £22m, and the use of granite setts for the whole surface will cause very expensive maintenance costs in future.

Blind people have particular concerns because there is minimal tactile demarcation between road and pavement and guide dogs may not differentiate and hence get confused.

(Note: The ABD is not in principle opposed to “shared space” schemes where traffic volumes are reasonably low and the design is done so as to avoid confusion to drivers and pedestrians. This is clearly not the case here. It looks pretty, but is in essence dangerous and dysfunctional).

Exhibition Road Shared Space Scheme



There was recently a demonstration against the shared space scheme in Exhibition Road, Kensington, organised by Gordon Taylor (shown above speaking to his supporters).

The photograph was taken very near the spot where a 71 year old pensioner was struck by a vehicle and suffered severe head injuries.

Is this group standing in the road?

No – the road is to the right, but you can see there is no clear demarcation. This is even less apparent if you look at the photograph below which is further north on this road.



You may not be able to tell, but the “pavement” is to the left, and the “road” is to the right (the other side of the lampposts).

It is very confusing for pedestrians and drivers alike.



What Has The Mayor Got To Hide?

The national ABD has issued the following press release:

In June, London Mayor Sadiq Khan opened a crucial consultation that will decide the future of transport in London.

The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) has spoken to several members of the public and found that hardly anyone was aware of it. Some felt that it had been seriously under-publicised.

There have been occasional tube station posters, but they are very bland, mentioning housing and employment but not the quite drastic policies planned for drivers.

Continued on next page.



What Has the Mayor Got To Hide? (Cont.)

For instance, the Mayor's Transport Strategy threatens the extension of the Congestion Charge across Greater London and new taxes to force drivers out of their cars.

Congestion charging spokesman Brian Mooney asks: "What has the Mayor got to hide?"

He amazingly claims that drivers pay too little to use the roads and they are subsidised by public transport users. Our research provides evidence to the contrary - that drivers pay four to five times over to use the roads and our taxes in fact subsidise public transport.

The Mayor's office was challenged to provide some evidence via a Freedom of Information Request, but could produce none.

If he thinks that the overtaxed driving public will support him; forcing us to pay even more - or worse still depriving us of using the roads we've paid for - then he should at least be upfront with us over his plans. It would be quite unacceptable if he takes silence as approval for his uncosted proposals - or even a blank cheque. Particularly as he was elected on a promise not to extend the Congestion Charge.

I challenge the Mayor to appear on a mainstream phone-in with me to face the public over this important issue. This should be within the next three weeks to meet the consultation deadline." [ENDS]

Note: The Mayor's claim on costs is on p265 of the Mayor's Transport Strategy consultation draft where it says: "...the fundamentally inadequate and unfair way in which road use is paid for in London, with motorists paying too little, and in effect being subsidised by public transport fare payers."

ABD London Campaign Director Roger Lawson has experienced similar evasion from Mayor Khan's aides at Transport for London. Roger asked for basic financial information on the costs and benefits of the ULEZ proposals, but no budgets or estimates of the costs have been provided.

See FOI Request Ref: FOI-0071-1718 - it is currently subject to a complaint to the Information Commissioner but the delays alone have frustrated democracy.



There is other evidence that the Mayor's MTS consultation does not meet legal expectations.

The Supreme Court ruled in 2014 "The demands of fairness are likely to be higher when the consultation relates to a decision which is likely to deprive someone of an existing benefit."

In a more recent case, Justice Patterson reiterated the principles upheld by the Supreme Court case that a consultation will be fair if it:

1. communicates the public authority's proposal to those with a potential interest;

2. explains why that proposal is being considered;

3. provides the consultees with sufficient information to make informed responses to the proposals.

A consultation in the summer holiday season with little publicity is fundamentally unfair.

The 300 page MTS document fails to give proper figures for what will certainly be the large sums of money Mayor Khan plans to take from those who can currently afford to drive in London or the substantial cost of implementing his schemes.

requirements of both law and democracy.

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.

MTS Campaign Support Site:

<http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/against-mts.htm>

In summary, the Mayor and TfL ignore the

Mayor's Transport Strategy—The Full Analysis:

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

ABD Response to Mayor's Transport Strategy

The Alliance of British Drivers has published its formal response to the public consultation on the Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS).

The Mayor's proposals are completely distorted because he does not seem to understand what roads are for. This is our answer to the first question posed in the consultation:

"It states on page 11 that 'London's streets should be for active travel and social interaction....'. This is nonsense. Streets are built and maintained at great public expense to provide an efficient and cost effective transport system for people and goods.

If people need exercise, or social interaction, there are many other ways they can obtain that without taking up scarce road space. The priority should be on providing a transport network in London that meets the business needs and preferences of the public. It should not be distorted to meet other objectives."

The full document can be obtained from the link below. It's well worth reading.

The MTS has a very heavy emphasis on environmental issues and one useful contribution on the debate about air pollution in London and how to tackle it has recently been published by the GLA Conservatives under the title "Clearing the Air" (it can easily be found on the internet).

It shows there are good alternatives to the Mayor's proposals which would not put such a heavy financial burden on London's residents and businesses.

You can already see the impact of some of the Mayor's policies in the news from TfL that license fees for Uber to operate in London will rise from £3,000 to £3 million for a 5-year license! Plus of course the subsequent threat to cancel their license altogether.

To make it clear, the Mayor's policies are not just an attack on diesel or petrol driven vehicles. They are an attack on all private vehicles and that includes private cars, PHVs and taxis. Even zero emission electric vehicles will be discouraged.

Roger Lawson

Mayor's Transport Strategy—The ABD's formal response can be obtained from this web page:
<http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/against-mts.htm>

Quentin Wilson Savages London Transport Policies

Taxi trade magazine Taxi Leaks have published a very good article by Quentin Wilson on the anti-car legacy of past and current Mayors. It starts by him saying:

"To lay the blame for the quality of London's air on passenger car drivers is a ponderous whopper of some magnitude. Every transport usage survey going tells us that car use in London has actually declined yet congestion and pollution has risen".

He's certainly right on that point.

He also says "The capital's road system didn't become the snarling constipated and polluted ruin it is today without considerable help from politicians and legislators. What we're now seeing (and breathing) are the unintended consequences of decades of deliberate anti-car policies" and he's undoubtedly right on that too.

He rightly blames the mess we now have on inept politicians from "I hate cars" Ken Livingstone, through to the current Mayor Sadiq Khan whose latest Transport Strategy Proposals will make matters worse.

Quentin also attacks the Congestion Charge for being a poor tax in terms of the revenue it generates, although he accepts that the reason congestion has not improved as a result is from road space reallocation.

But that is the excuse TfL give when in reality such schemes are basically ineffective because there is such an excess of unmet demand just waiting to fill up any space left by people deterred by the congestion charge.

Apart from that minor error, the article is a very good explanation of the defects in London's traffic and transport policies over the last twenty years.

Opposition to Mayor's Air Pollution Plans

We have covered some of the dubious aspects of the Mayor's approach to tackling air pollution in London before. The T-Charge and ULEZ plans will be very expensive for Londoners, may have little effect and will target private car users unnecessarily when they are very minor contributors to emissions.

Campaign group **FairFuelUK** have launched a fund-raising to finance a judicial review of the T-Charge. The Toxicity Charge is a £10 penalty to be paid from October by older vehicles that do not meet newer emission standards if they are driven into the central Congestion Charging area.

In summary they argue that even TfL concede it will have little impact on air pollution so it's another of those "political gestures" that will impose major costs on some of the poorer road users. Go to the link below for more information and to help fund the case.

Croydon 20MPH

Another judicial review where the case has already been filed in court is that over the public consultation in Croydon on implementation of the blanket 20 MPH speed limit. The ABD supported an active local campaign against the proposals and we have also complained to the Council about the defective consultation process.

The process was changed from one area to another, apparently with the objective of obtaining the desired result, the information provided to residents was biased, the results ignored, and objections not considered properly. There are established legal principles about how public consultation should be run to ensure they are fair and unbiased, which is no doubt the basis of the challenge.

Both the above cases are in essence about illogical and unreasonable attacks on car and van drivers in the name of environmental improvement when there will allegedly be negligible advantage but significant costs imposed on drivers.



FairFuelUK Campaign and Legal Challenge:
<https://www.crowdjustice.com/case/stop-toxic-taxes/>



How Many Deaths from Air Pollution in London?

How many deaths from air pollution in London each year? You might think that is a simple question to answer because you have seen the headlines in the media.

It's 9,416 according to a report published by Kings College which is of course a nice exact figure. The press have abbreviated it to "nearly 9,500".

The first problem though is that 9,416 is "premature deaths", i.e. their lives were shortened to a greater or lesser extent. There were no actual deaths directly attributed to air pollution, i.e. present on the death certificate.

Even the 9,416 is not a correct figure because there are a range of "shortenings", which may stretch from hours to years. The estimated distribution of shortenings has been converted to a single figure of deaths so that the ignorant readers of the popular press, or those reading internet blogs, might understand it.

This is an exceedingly complex topic which I won't even attempt to explain in full in this brief article. But the latest news is that even the estimates used to calculate this number are dubious to say the least.

New advice from the "Committee on the Medical Effects of Air Pollution" (COMEAP) set up by DEFRA is that the uncertainty about the evidence is growing.

Although there appears to be a statistical association between air pollution factors and mortality, in the case of NO2 COMEAP have now backed off from drawing any specific conclusions.

Continued on next page.



How Many Deaths? (Cont.)

This is what COMEAP have now said: *“The Committee has not been able to come to a consensus view on how the epidemiological associations between NO2 and mortality can be used to either predict the benefits of interventions to improve air quality or to estimate the current mortality burden imposed on the UK population by air pollution. Some members are doubtful that the evidence is sufficient to allow a robust recommendation for quantification to be made. This is particularly the case for effects likely to be caused by NO2 itself.”*

Regardless of that opinion, they still came down in support of giving specific recommendations on the likely impact of air pollutants on mortality.

He claims most Londoners are exposed to levels that exceed WHO guidelines. Here's a summary of the report:

The research, based on the latest updated London Atmospheric Emissions Inventory, shows that 7.9 million Londoners – nearly 95 per cent of the capital's population – live in areas of London that exceed the guidelines by 50 per cent or more.

PM2.5 are small toxic air particles which are alleged to have the greatest impact on health with both short and long-term exposure increasing the likelihood of respiratory and cardiovascular diseases.

Children are particularly affected and may develop reduced lung function and asthma.

Now this writer is not going to argue that cleaning up London's air is not necessary, and it's already happening of course. The key question, is by how much and what should be spent on doing it. What is the cost/benefit ratio of extending the ULEZ is one key point that needs to be answered.

If nobody has an accurate figure of the current disbenefits, how can we know what the benefits of cutting pollution are likely to be? Also TfL have been remarkably evasive in answering some simple questions about the costs of implementation of their proposals.

They have refused to provide the data in response to an FOI request. Why are there no budgets that they are willing to disclose so we can attempt to work out the answers for ourselves?

Around half of PM2.5 emissions in London are from external sources outside the city, however, the main sources of PM2.5 emissions in London are from tyre and brake wear, construction and wood burning.

The Mayor is clear that he wants to reduce emissions from wood burning through improved education about the types of fuel that should be used and when they should be used. He also wants a stricter set of emission standards on future sales of wood burning stoves to tackle this problem.

Comment: Why anyone should be permitted to use a wood-burning stove in central London when most people think such usage was banned under the Clean Air Act rather surprises me.

One has to suspect that the case for really tough measures, such as effectively removing all diesel cars from London's streets, is not as strong as it should be. When the costs imposed on car users can run into very substantial figures, we should be told the truth.

Making up policy based on guesstimates is not good enough.

Roger Lawson

Air Pollution from Small Particulates

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, has released new research giving the emissions of toxic particles known as PM2.5.



But a lot of the particulate emissions are from construction in London, or are blown in from outside – and much of those are from agriculture, or even pollution from other countries.

It is not at all clear how the Mayor is going to tackle these, but dust from tyre and brake wear is more easily controlled. Whether this would have a significant impact overall, or are cost effective measures, is not obvious though. Unfortunately this looks like political posturing by the Mr Khan, using children as his cheer leaders in this campaign.

Regrettably such pollution is mainly a symptom of over population, which Mr Khan and his predecessors seem not to want to do anything about.

New Cycle Superhighways

Transport for London (TfL) have published their proposed plans for two new Cycle Superhighways. These are:

CS4 which runs from Tower Bridge to Greenwich along Jamaica Road and via Deptford.

CS9 which runs from Kensington Olympia via Hammersmith and Chiswick to Brentford.

For detailed information and to respond to the public consultations, please use the links below:

CS4 Consultation: <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/cs4/?cid=cs4>
CS9 Consultation: <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/roads/cs9/>

Taking CS4 first, this will add substantially to journey times for both general traffic and buses. For example, up to 6 minutes extra journey time eastbound in the evening from Tooley Street to Surrey Quays Road (**i.e. a 50% increase!**) although there are some savings at other times and in other directions.

There will be increased traffic on Jamaica Road and more congestion at the Rotherhithe Roundabout (near the entrance to the Tunnel) due to reconfiguration.

However, TfL have already introduced an extra entrance lane northbound from the roundabout to the tunnel road which should assist.

But reduction in road space on Jamaica Road to accommodate a segregated dual flow cycle lane, plus the introduction of “bus bypasses” will surely cause all traffic to be slowed to that of buses.

(Historic note: I objected to the introduction of bus lanes on Jamaica Road which were unnecessary and substantially increased traffic congestion.

Jamaica Road became one street to avoid, and the latest proposals will make that even more true).

Anyone affected by these proposals should study them and respond to the public consultation as soon as possible, as the ABD will be doing.



Here's one comment already received from a member of the public on this scheme: *“Since when has Jamaica Road been free of traffic as they pretend to show in their consultation photos (see example right) when in fact the traffic is pretty much stationary all along that road all day long?”*

This is a major commuter route for people and businesses from the east and south east who use the Rotherhithe tunnel to cross the river - and they want more people to use bikes? Really do they expect people to cycle from Essex and Kent? Why not revert back to horse and carts or why not just pedestrianise the whole of London and open it to cyclists only? This is an utterly disgraceful proposal thought out by people at TfL that clearly have never been down to Jamaica Road to see with their eyes the reality of the traffic”.

There are also complementary changes to support CS4 to Tanner Street and Druid Street which there is a separate public consultation on.

As regards CS9, TfL's journey time modelling suggests less of an impact than the time increases on CS4, but again some journey times worsen while others improve. London residents affected by these changes should respond to the consultation as soon as possible, as the ABD will be doing.

Anyone who has any views on it should let me know please.

Roger Lawson



Cyclist Faced Manslaughter Charge

The case of Charlie Alliston who faced a manslaughter charge for killing a pedestrian received a lot of media coverage, and it was surely not just because of the shortage of good news stories in August.

Mr Alliston ran into Mrs Kim Briggs, 44, on Old Street in London. She suffered major head injuries and died a week later. It has been revealed that not only was he doing over 18 mph, but the bike he was riding was a racing model – a “fixie” with no brakes, i.e. with fixed pedals and no front brake when it is illegal to ride such bikes on public roads.

He apparently shouted to her to get out of the way, and even shouted at her after the crash.

This is not the first such case. The Daily Mail published a good article by Chris Greenwood earlier

this year giving some of the data and other cases. He reported that the number of accidents between cyclists and pedestrians had soared by 47% in seven years, rising to 408 in 2015. He noted several pedestrians were killed which resulted in prosecutions of cyclists. He also reported that the biggest regional spike in the numbers was in London (226 accidents in 2015).



Now I have commented on the problems caused by some cyclists riding “furiously” on London streets before – in a blog post entitled “Are Cyclists Racing on London Streets?”.

I came to the conclusion that they were – if not against each other, against themselves – based on Strava trip times.



As a result I got an enormous amount of abuse from a few cyclists.

After a lot of analysis, I came to the conclusion that the comments did not undermine the main point of the article and I said “*it is very clear from anyone who walks, cycles or drives in London that there are a minority of cyclists acting in a somewhat dangerous way both to themselves and other people. In other words, cycling at an excessive speed in relation to road hazards and other road users*”. This latest case simply reinforces the message that there are dangerous cyclists in London and the problem is getting worse if anything.

Charlie Alliston was found not guilty of manslaughter by a jury but guilty of the offence of “wanton or furious driving”.

He showed no remorse which the judge commented negatively upon. Mr Alliston was subsequently sentenced to 18 months in a young offenders' institution.

There were some very relevant comments after the trial by Mrs Briggs widower, himself a cyclist, who said: “*The current law is outdated and has not kept pace with the huge increase in the number of people cycling and the associated risk of collisions, nor the attitude of some cyclists. We need to change the way the law deals with this. I am calling for an introduction of laws of causing death or serious injury by dangerous or careless cycling, thereby bringing cycling laws into line with the Road Traffic Act*”. Those are surely sensible proposals.

Mr Briggs also made some negative comments about “some aspects of our cycling culture”.

This case is like many that attract a lot of public attention. Effectively a tragedy arising from a whole combination of unusual circumstances – a young rider (aged 18 at the time), on an inappropriate bike, with a vulnerable pedestrian who might have been on a mobile phone at the time (i.e. not looking when crossing the street). Mr Briggs' comments are very much to the point, and updating the law in this area would surely be worthwhile. But changing the culture so that some cyclists do not behave so aggressively and consider they have the right of way regardless is going to be a more difficult problem to solve.

The Government has promised some changes to legislation however.

Roger Lawson.

Garden Bridge Down The River

Yes that vanity project the Thames Garden Bridge has finally been cancelled. After it lost the support of Mayor Sadiq Khan it has not been able to get enough funding from private sources. The amount of money wasted is forecast to be about £46 million. And most of that came from public funds, i.e. your taxes, with nothing to show for it at all. But better late than never so far as cancellation is concerned.

It was a bridge sold on attracting tourists but was not in the right place and not useable by many people who might wish to cross the Thames at that point.

No proper cost/benefit analysis was done on it. But like that other more grandiose vanity transport project, HS2, once these projects get launched they soon gain a momentum of their own as lobbyists for commercial groups who might benefit promote the project.

Now HS2 has only spent about £2 billion to date, without laying a single foot of track, but if it was cancelled now we might save over £70 billion. As with the Garden Bridge, there are lots of other better uses to which the money could be put.

It's not too late. Just time to make a tough decision.

R.W.L.



Proposal to Increase PCN Cost

Transport for London (TfL) have announced proposals to increase the cost of a Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) from £130 to £160. That is the charge payable when you don't pay the Congestion Charge (a.k.a. tax) or infringe the Red Route rules.

They claim the number of people incurring PCNs has been increasing, particularly those who are repeat offenders (64% of Congestion Charge infringers and 38% of Red Route infringers). They claim increasing the PCN cost would reduce the number by providing a stronger deterrent.



But they provide no evidence for that claim.

It is possible that repeat offenders have increased simply because TfL do not manage to collect the PCN charge – they provide no data on this in the consultation which as usual with recent TfL consultations is very poor. It does not provide the information required to make an informed response.

One reason for the increase in Congestion Charge PCNs may simply be that people now have more difficulty in paying it since the number of payment methods have been reduced over the years since introduction, or that TfL are not promoting the need to pay as actively.

But it is wrong that the increase of 23% in the PCN cost is much higher than could be justified by general price inflation since the

last increase. This just looks like part of the Mayor's strategy to make life more and more difficult for the average motorist as a very high proportion of infringements that result in PCNs are accidental or from ignorance by drivers rather than deliberate avoidance.

That explains why TfL collected income of £168 million from Congestion Charge infringements and £35 million in Red Route infringements last year. That's surely enough!

The ABD has already responded to this consultation but anyone who drives in London should also do so as soon as possible. Go to the link below for more information and a simple on-line response form you can use. **DO MAKE SURE YOU OBJECT!**

National Accident Trends and Bus Accidents in London

Fatal accidents on Britain's roads rose 4% to 1,792 last year (see chart on next page).

That's the highest level since 2011 and is clear evidence that fatal accidents are not falling despite all the chest beating of politicians about excessive speeds, and millions of pounds spent on speed cameras, speed awareness courses and traffic calming.

Continued in next page.



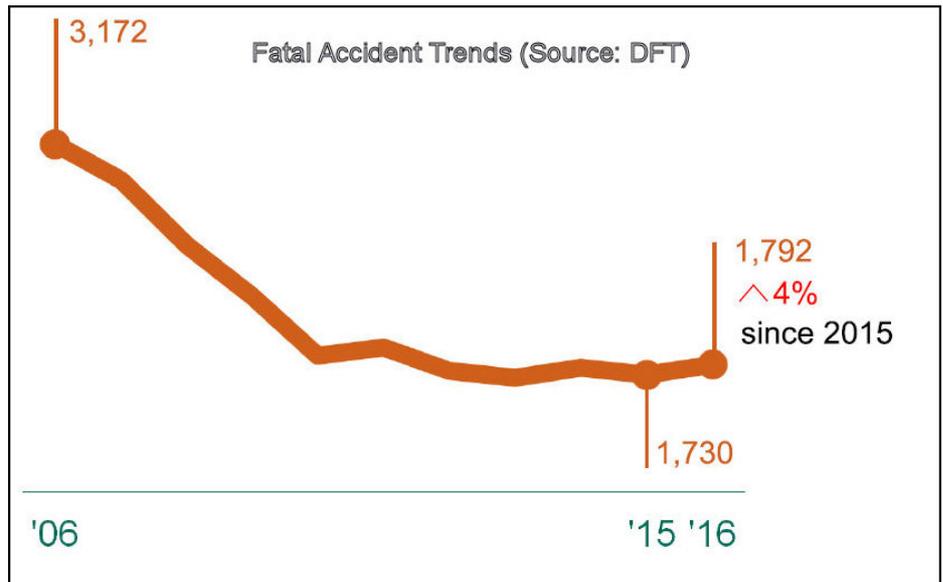
PCN Consultation:

<https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/general/penalty-charge-notice/>

Accident Trends (Cont.)

The DfT say the change in fatalities are not statistically significant, but even more alarming is the KSI figure which was up 8% in 2016 over the previous year and which is more statistically significant. The slight injuries were only up 4% but that may have been particularly affected by a change in the reporting system and are notoriously sensitive to “under-reporting”.

Explanations from the DfT are the impact of the weather, the fact that accidents tend to rise when the economy is buoyant, plus lots of other factors. The growth in traffic is only a very minor possible factor.



So in summary, the UK road safety industry and its experts have been an abject failure since about 2011 when the accident figures started to flatline.

An example of political posturing that is irrelevant to tackling the real road safety problems is the

ambition of the Mayor, Sadiq Khan, in his Mayor’s Transport Strategy to reduce injuries from bus collisions in London to zero. In reality data from TfL show the number of collisions have been rising – up from 22,676 in 2013 to 28,035 in 2016.

The number of injuries also rose to 1,231 in 2016.

What might be the reasons for these increases? Possibly more cyclists on the roads, more pedestrians who cross the road without looking, many using their phones at the time, and lots of other factors.

So the response of the Mayor is to look at speed limiting technology for buses and anti-collision sensors. Will they solve the problem? Nobody knows because there is no road accident investigation branch similar to those used for rail and aviation, as the ABD has repeatedly called for.

In my view, only when Government politicians, the Mayor and TfL stop looking for quick answers to complex problems will we get some sense back into the road safety debate.

In the meantime, it’s just a disgrace that nobody in power seems to be facing up to the reality that the UK is going backwards in road safety.

Roger Lawson

Uber Kicked Out of London

Transport for London (TfL) have announced that Uber’s licence to operate in London will not be renewed.

That means their service will terminate in a few weeks and 40,000 drivers will be put out of work. There are as many as 3.5 million Uber users in London.

A petition to reverse the decision has already been established on Change.org which collected 450,000 signatures in about 24 hours.

TfL, supported by Mayor Sadiq Khan, claim Uber is not a fit and proper organisation to hold a license due to its failure to report incidents, failures on vetting drivers and other grounds. Uber have 21 days in which to appeal, and no doubt there will be a legal challenge as well if TfL do not back down.

TfL previously announced that license fees for Uber to operate in London will rise from £3,000 to £3 million for a 5-year license, so it is clear that the Mayor is attacking Uber via more than one channel.

Continued on next page.



Uber Kicked Out (Cont.)

Why is the Mayor doing this? It is clear from the Mayor's recently published Transport Strategy that Private Hire Vehicles (PHVs) such as Uber operate are contributing to traffic congestion in London in a big way. But it is also clear that the Mayor objects to all private vehicles whether you drive them or someone else drives them for you.

Are there alternatives to Uber? Lyft is a big similar operator in the USA but does not operate in London yet. Taxify launched in London recently but then had to suspend operations after TfL queried its license. There is a service called Hailo that operates to call conventional taxis (don't bother trying to use it in outer

London though in my experience), and numerous local PHV operators plus larger operators such as Addison Lee who have a ride hailing app.

Comment: I am not totally convinced that the allegations against Uber are serious enough to warrant refusal of a license. Perhaps Uber should up its game in several areas, but is it any worse than other PHV operators? As a relatively new service, with lots of new drivers, there are likely to be some teething problems. Other penalties could surely have been considered. For example, a grant of a new license for a limited period on certain conditions being met.

I have used Uber a few times and the service is both efficient and low cost (Uber loses money in a big way I understand).

For example, I called Uber recently to take my wife home at 3.00 am in the morning from an outer London hospital. The driver arrived in about 3 minutes. Great service at very reasonable cost.

Many people will see this act by the Mayor for what it is. A simple attack on a service that the Mayor and those in TfL would like to put out of business so that people have to walk, cycle or use public transport (i.e. use many less safe alternatives) if you read his Transport Strategy. That is why the ABD is so opposed to it.

It is true that the number of PHVs is contributing to traffic congestion, but there are other ways to ration their numbers and usage (e.g. on price). I recommend that you sign the petition, as I shall be doing.

Roger Lawson.

A Vision in a Dream,

After Coleridge

The following manuscript has recently come to light, perhaps written by an acolyte of poet Samuel Taylor Coleridge.

*In London did Sadiq Khan
A stately Transport Strategy decree:
Where the Thames, the sacred river, ran
Through caverns measureless to man
Down to a sunless sea.
So twice five miles of fertile ground
With walls and tower blocks girdled round;
And there were gardens bright with sinuous
rills,
Where blossomed many a conker tree;
And here were roads ancient as the Romans,
Enfolding sunny spots of greenery.*

*But oh! that deep romantic chasm which
slanted
Down among the City streets!*

*A savage place! As Mammon rampaged free
As e'er beneath a waning moon was haunted
By women waiting for West End shopping!*

*And from this chasm, with ceaseless turmoil
seething,
As if this earth in fast thick pants were
breathing,
A mighty fountain momentarily was forced:
Amid whose swift half-intermitted burst
Huge fragments vaulted like rebounding hail,
Or chaffy grain beneath the thresher's flail:
And mid these dancing rocks at once and
ever
It flung up momentarily the sacred river.
Fifty miles meandering with a mazy motion
Through East End industry and London's
suburbs,
Then reached the caverns measureless to
man,
And sank in tumult to a polluted North
Sea;
And 'mid this tumult Sadiq beard from far
Ancestral voices prophesying air pollution
doom!*

*The shadow of the dome of the GLA
Located nigh the sacred river;
Where was heard the mingled pleas
From politicians left and right.
It was a miracle of rare device,*

*An un-costed Transport Strategy at the
behest of Sadiq!*

*A damsel with a dulcimer
In a vision once I saw:
It was an East European maid
And on her dulcimer she played,
Singing of Mount Street Mayfair.
Could I revive within me
Her symphony and song,
To such a deep delight 'twould win me,*

*That with music loud and long,
I would build anew that dome,
Upon a new democratic model!
With freedom to ride the roads at will,
And all should cry, Beware the wrath of
Khan!*

*His flashing eyes, his floating hair!
Weave a circle round him thrice,
And close your eyes with holy dread
For he on honey-dew hath fed,
And drunk the milk of Paradise.*





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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

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



A.B.D. London Campaign Director and Editor: Roger Lawson (Tel: 020-8295-0378). Use the ABD-London web site Contact Page here to contact: <http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/Contact.htm> . Contact the above for information on the aims and objectives of the A.B.D. or for membership information (membership costs £25.00 per annum). The A.B.D. would be happy to advise or assist anyone who is concerned about any traffic, transport or road safety issues in London. Complimentary subscriptions to this newsletter are available on request to anyone with an interest in transport matters. Our internet web address is: www.freedomfordrivers.org (or www.abd.org.uk for the national ABD web site). This newsletter is supplied in electronic form which can be displayed and printed via the free Adobe Acrobat Reader. Past copies of our newsletters can be obtained from the www.freedomfordrivers.org web site.

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