

# ABD London News

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## Editorial

NHS in crisis (queues in A&E, operations postponed and delays getting to see your GP), road network suffering from worse congestion, overcrowded trains and underground in London, air pollution still a problem, not enough schools to accommodate growing numbers of children and simply not enough houses to meet the demand for homes. These are simply symptoms of too many people.

The population of the UK has been growing rapidly and particularly in London and the South-East. The latest figures from TfL show that the number of trips by London residents grew by 1.3% in 2016, up by 19.7% from the year 2000. The population of London grew by 21.4% in that period.

Forecasts for the future are for it to grow from the level of 8.8 million people in 2016 to 10.8 million in 2041 according to the Mayor’s London Plan (see later article in this edition on that subject), i.e. another 22%.

More people means more housing demand, more businesses in which they can work, more shops (or more internet shopping deliveries) to supply them, more transport to move them around and more demand on local authorities to supply services to them.

In addition more people means more air pollution – it’s not just transport that generates air pollution and even if every vehicle in London was a zero emission one we would still have major emissions from office and domestic heating, from construction activities, and from many other sources.

The London Plan and Mayor Sadiq Khan talk about “good growth” but unfortunately the exact opposite is likely to be the case. It will be “bad” growth as the infrastructure fails to keep up with population growth even if we could afford to build it.

*Continued on next page.*



**Quotes of the Month.** Here are a few of the responses from the public to our campaign against the Mayor’s Transport Strategy:

*“The mayor of London is out of his mind. He shouldn’t be given such powers. He has no right to destroy our way of life in London”. Y.K.*

*“I am not sure who advises the Mayor and all the Government Departments but I think it is about time they were allowed to use the brain God gave them and get on with what they are paid too do instead of wasting everybody’s time and money”. L.R.*

*“The Mayor is planning to basically take away my income and make my health worse. If that is the case and he plans to go ahead with this, I assume the Mayor will compensate me....”. V.N.*

*“I think this is so elitist. Please let me know how I can object”. V.L.*



## Editorial (Cont.)

In London we have not kept up with the pace of population growth for many years and the future will surely be no different.

Readers of this newsletter are mostly London residents and all of you will have suffered from the problems of past policies which condone if not actually promote the growth of London's population. Indeed Mayor Khan insists London should remain "open" which no doubt means in other language that he is opposed to halting immigration – for example he opposes Brexit and any restrictions on EU residents moving to London which has been one source of growth in the population in recent years.

There are of course several policies that wise politicians might adopt to tackle these problems.

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Despite the attitude of many non-residents to the New Towns, most of those who actually live in them thought they were a massive improvement and continue to do so. It surely does not require compulsion - just political leadership and wise financial policies to encourage such change.

These are towns with few traffic congestion or air pollution problems even though some of them are now the size of cities – for example Milton Keynes now has a population of 230,000.

It is worth pointing out that past policies for New Towns and redistribution of London's population were supported by both Labour and Conservative Governments.

Restrictions on immigration and the promotion of birth control are two of them that would limit population growth. China is a great example of how a public policy to discourage children has resulted in dynamic economic growth whereas previously China suffered from population growth that outpaced the provision of resources to support them – result: abject poverty for much of the population, that is now receding into history.

The other answer is to redistribute the population to less crowded parts of the country. It is easier and cheaper to build new infrastructure and homes in less populous parts of the country than London. Back in the 1940s and 1950s there was a national policy to encourage businesses and people to move out of London into "New Towns" such as Bracknell, Basildon, Harlow, Stevenage, Milton Keynes and even further afield.

But we have more recently had left-wing Mayors in London (Ken Livingstone and Sadiq Khan) who adopted policies that seemed to encourage the growth in the population of London for their own political purposes, thus ignoring the results of their own policies on the living standards of Londoners. So we get lots of young people living in poor quality flats, unable to buy a home while social housing provision cannot cope with the demand.

The Mayor's London Plan is an example of how not to respond wisely to the forecast growth in the population of London. His only solution to the inadequate road network and inadequate capacity on the London Underground or surface rail is to

Government departments that were based in central London were moved to places such as Cardiff or the North of England. The population of London fell as a result.

I was talking to one of the TfL staff who attended the meeting on the London Plan in Bexley (see report on page 9) on this subject. I suggested that a good way to solve the traffic congestion and demand for housing in London would be to encourage redistribution. His response was that people would object to being "forcibly moved". But that is not what happened.

Businesses and people were only too happy to move to a better environment. Businesses got low cost factories and offices. People got new, better quality homes and there were well planned schools and medical facilities.



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encourage people to walk, cycle or catch a bus. But usage of buses has been declining as they get delayed by traffic congestion and provide a very poor quality experience for the users.

This has been a long editorial but the issue of London's population growth underpins every policy that needs to be adopted in the traffic and transport milieu of London, which this newsletter focusses upon.

The next time you talk to a London politician, just ask him why he thinks London should grow rather than shrink!

Roger Lawson (Editor)



## The ULEZ – It's About Money

The ABD issued the following press release after we finally managed to obtain some information about the costs of the Ultra Low Emission Zone proposals:

### The Real Reason for the ULEZ in London – It's About Money

The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) has said before that we are suspicious about the reasons given for the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) in London. The proposed measures, particularly the extension to within the North/South Circular, seemed disproportionate to the likely benefits from reductions in air pollution. This is particularly so, bearing in mind that emissions from vehicles are rapidly falling, as newer vehicles replace older ones.

The Mayor has great financial difficulties, as is apparent from his recently published budget for the next few years, where he begs for more financial support from central Government. But he surely will not need their support with this scheme in place, even though he does not have the funds to do it without more borrowing.

Just like the central London Congestion Charge (a.k.a. Tax), where charges were later raised (more than doubled), thus making it a very profitable for TfL. Once the infrastructure, such as cameras, are in place for the ULEZ, charges can then be raised.

### Now we know the truth!

In April 2017 we asked for information on the financial budgets for the ULEZ – the likely costs and income the Mayor would get. The request was refused and we eventually had to appeal to the Information Commissioner's Office (ICO). We have now received the requested data following a judgement in our favour. These are the figures received from Transport for London (TfL):

**Implementation costs: £38.4m.**

#### Operating income and costs:

- Impact of introduction of ULEZ on income (£m) over 5 years 2017/18 to 2021/22 inclusive. (+ve is net increase in income): **£55.3m.**

- Impact of introduction of ULEZ on costs (£m) over 5 years 2017/18 to 2021/22 inclusive. (-ve is net increase): **-£12.7m.**

The scheme can also be extended way past when traffic air pollution ceases to be a problem, thus potentially introducing more general road pricing.

Will the health benefits outweigh the costs of the scheme to Londoners? The answer is no because they are only valued at £7.1 million over 5 years.

This duplicity in justifying the ULEZ on health grounds, which few are likely to oppose, when the real reason may be to fund his empire, is surely typical of Mayor Sadiq Khan's approach to politics and democracy. Who does not want cleaner air?



But these figures make absolutely no sense as against the figures we have calculated for operating income based on data provided in the ULEZ consultation documents. For example we estimate income over five years as being £313.6 million rather than £55.3 million.

**In reality TfL may be making a profit over five years of £300.9 million for a capital investment of £38.4 million.** At a stroke Sadiq Khan will solve his budget problems with the ULEZ implemented.



But there are lots of ways to improve air quality from transport and other sources, without imposing such enormous costs on road users.

To remind readers, the ULEZ charge for non-compliant cars will be £12.50, imposed 24/7, and enormous numbers of people will need to buy new cars to avoid this cost.

Readers should make sure they oppose the extension of the ULEZ by responding to the public consultation before the 28<sup>th</sup> February which is available from the link below:

**MAKE SURE YOU DO!**

#### ULEZ and LEZ Consultation:

<https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/environment/air-quality-consultation-phase-3b/?cid=airquality-consultation>

## More Information on the ULEZ Costs

Our full analysis of the costs and benefits of the ULEZ can be obtained from the link on the right.

## The Delays in Responding to the Requests on ULEZ Costs

Back in April 2017 the ABD responded to a public consultation on the proposed extension of the ULEZ. However we criticised the lack of information on the cost/benefit of the scheme, indeed of any information on costs and likely revenues at all, which made making an informed response to the consultation difficult.

As Transport for London (TfL) refused to provide such information when requested we submitted a Freedom of Information Act request.

### Analysis of Costs and Benefits of the ULEZ:

<http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/Cost-of-the-ULEZ.pdf>

TfL refused the request on the grounds of “commercial confidentiality” so we asked for a review and subsequently appealed to the Information Commissioner’s Office (ICO).

They upheld our complaint and so we eventually received the requested information after all (it is given above). But is it not disgraceful that TfL can obstruct and delay this legitimate need for such information?

TfL claimed it was commercially sensitive because they were already talking to possible suppliers but the ICO judged that there was insufficient evidence that such disclosure would result in specific harm to TfL that would justify refusal.

It is unfortunately typical of late for the Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, to issue public consultations in his name that are biased polemics of the benefits of his proposals while not disclosing the facts. Democracy is undermined when a public authority acts in this way.

It is further undermined when TfL refuse to disclose information and by doing so delay its release past the consultation due date when they know any appeal process will take many months.

When you respond to the ULEZ consultation, you may like to include a complaint about the approach now regularly taken by the Mayor and TfL to consultations.

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## Air Pollution and Asthma

The Financial Times reported on 23/12/2017 that the Government is going to launch a consultation on tighter restrictions on wood burning stoves. Particulates (e.g. PM2.5) as well as NOX emissions are seen as one of the reasons to reduce diesel vehicle usage but according to the FT, forty percent of particulate emissions in the UK come from burning wood and coal in homes – more than double that from diesel cars. Sadiq Khan in London is particularly concerned about the growth in the numbers of wood-burning stoves. For some reason they don’t seem to be covered by the Clean Air Acts that stopped the burning of coal in most UK cities.

**Comment:** it would certainly seem wise to tackle this problem. One of my local pubs recently installed such a fire in their restaurant. It may feel good to have a roaring wood fire near you over dinner, but it’s not good for air pollution or public health.

Meanwhile Private Eye published this report following the revelation that a number of top racing cyclists are taking medication for asthma: “The NHS is urging parents to look for signs of asthma in their children, which could include heavy wheezing, shortness of breath and winning the Tour de France. Another tell-tale sign your child could be asthmatic is that they’ve just signed to ride with Team Sky”.

It seems “exercised induced asthma” (EIA) is now a well-known condition.

So you need to add that to the list of causes of asthma we gave in an article in our last edition.

## Follow the Blog

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

<https://abdondon.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.

You can also follow us on Twitter at @Drivers\_London to pick up topical news as it appears.

## London Plan – ABD Submits Comments

We made some initial comments on the “London Plan” in December. That is a document that spells out how Mayor Sadiq Khan intends to plan your life – at least so far as residents of London are concerned or those who have to use the transport system in the capital.

What’s the London Plan? It’s a document that sets the “spatial development” strategy for London over the next few years and has legal implications for planning developments, housing construction, transport infrastructure and many other aspects of our lives.

The London Plan spells out how the Mayor intends to enforce “modal shift”, i.e. force you to use public transport or walk/cycle and ensure you take more exercise to improve your health. He intends to turn roads whose essential purpose is the movement of goods and people into places for “social interaction”.

Cars and other private transport modes will be discouraged by such means as reducing parking provision to zero, thus forcing us back into the Victorian era if not further.

He wants to fix his budget problems arising from financial incompetence and promises he made to get elected, now called a “funding gap”, by raising taxes including taking control of Vehicle Excise Duty (VED).

Some of this is covered in the Mayor’s Transport Strategy of course to which we have encouraged people to respond. But the important point is that unlike that where the Mayor will decide on the outcome, the London Plan is the subject of an inquiry led by a Planning Inspector, i.e. it’s an independent review.

You can see what the ABD has submitted to the inquiry on the London Plan on the first link below.

You can also submit your own comments on the London Plan to the public consultation by going to the second link below.

**Please be sure to do so.  
The more comments that are received, the better.**

### London Plan—ABD’s Comments:

<http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/London-Plan-ABD-Comments-Submitted.pdf>

### London Plan—Consultation Page:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan/comment-draft-london-plan>

## Street Lights, Charging Points and Electric Taxis

One of the problems in London for vehicle owners who wish to buy an electric one is how to recharge it. Many Londoners do not have off street parking facilities but park in the road near their house. One solution is for local councils to implement charging sockets in street lamps. Two London boroughs are trying out such arrangements.

Kensington & Chelsea are installing 50 charging points in street lighting columns next to

pay and display parking bays on a trial basis. Users have to purchase a cable and pay a subscription plus a charge for the electricity used. Wandsworth is likewise to install 50 charging points on a similar scheme.

These installations are only possible where the lamp posts are next to the kerb to avoid cables crossing the footpath. Unfortunately in many roads the street lights are not at the kerb but are on the side of the footpath next to front gardens and moving them, plus the electricity supply, would be enormously expensive. Different councils seem to have adopted differing policies on street lighting positioning in the past.



Meanwhile electric black cabs have hit the streets of London. Initial deliveries of the £55,000 vehicles from the London EV Company have commenced. The taxis can travel up to 80 miles on electric charge alone, but have a back-up petrol engine.

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## Electric Taxis (Cont.)

The new taxi got very positive reviews in the media in terms of facilities and comfort. All new taxis in London have to be zero emission capable from the start of 2018.

But there are only a couple of recharging points that the new cabs can use in central London at present. An £18m scheme to install 75 rapid charging stations by the end of this year is behind schedule and Steve McNamara of the Licensed Taxi Drivers Association was quoted as saying “The whole thing is just a farce, you couldn't make it up”. TfL claim there will be up to 200 such points by the end of 2018.



Surely he is confusing stopping increases (which mainly covered inflation), with reducing fares?

TfL's latest budgets are particularly constrained by a reduction in forecast public transport revenues. Bus usage for example has been falling, so revenue growth is anticipated to be lower than expected in previous budgets. Bus operating deficit was £599 million in 2016/2017 but will rise to £632 million this year and be as high as £647 million in 2022/23. These are enormous numbers.

Looking at the Financial Summary (page 30), shows that overall TfL will show an operating surplus before “capital renewals” and “financing costs”. After the latter they are running big deficits up until 2020/21.

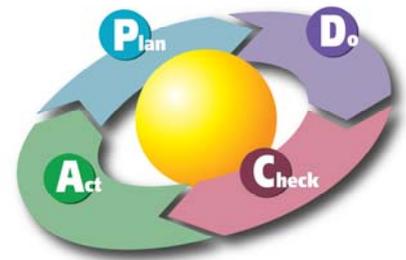
## TfL Business Plan – Mayor Sadiq Khan Wants More Money

Just before Christmas, Transport for London published their proposed Business Plan for the five years to 2022/23. You can find it on the web easily if you require the details, but what follows is a summary, with some comments.

The foreword by Mayor Sadiq Khan contains the usual whinging from him about the lack of central Government subsidy and his budget difficulties. It is true that TfL no longer receive a central Government grant for operating subsidies.

This is what one might term “political presentation of finance data”. Cash flow was negative to the tune of £1,353 million in 2016/17 and it only really becomes positive 4 years later. For someone with experience of looking at the finances of organisations, as this writer has, this looks a very unhealthy financial profile.

One result of this financial plan is that the Mayor is cutting funding for road maintenance that goes to local boroughs. This will not necessarily affect minor road maintenance but it will mean cuts to major projects. Part of the reason is because a lot of the money is going to support cycling initiatives, the redevelopment (pedestrianisation) of Oxford Street and other major projects that are mainly in central London.



But that was agreed by Boris Johnson on the basis that they would obtain extra income from the new Elizabeth line. There are still substantial capital grants though.

The Mayor is of course suffering from his self-imposed hair-shirt by promising to freeze public transport fares in London when campaigning to get elected. He has implemented that, at least as far as TfL controlled fares are concerned. He even says that this “will put £200 back in Londoners' pockets by 2020”.



Local boroughs are likely to be very unhappy with the cuts to funding of Local Implementation Plan (LIP) programmes, particularly as projects tend to be planned years in advance so abrupt changes in funds available may mean a lot of planning work is wasted.

The lack of major renewal work on roads will surely cause the proverbial “stitch in time” to come true. It will lead to expensive short-term fixes, and more major work in due course if proper maintenance is delayed. For example, bridges often require substantial work after many years of use and that cannot be deferred forever.

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## TfL Business Plan (Cont.)

Big projects that are consuming the funds are more cycle super-highways, Vauxhall Cross, Wandsworth Gyratory, the Silvertown Tunnel and the Rotherhithe to Canary Wharf bridge (which we commented on negatively as regards its' financial wisdom in a previous newsletter).

The Mayor and TfL are complaining that the cost of operating and maintaining London's roads of up to £350m per year are effectively being cross-subsidised by public transport fare payers.

He therefore argues that they need some of the money raised from Vehicle Excise Duty (VED) to pay for it. This is nonsense.

The Mayor has very substantial income from business rates and other sources (such as congestion charging) – these more than cover the costs of operating and maintaining the road network (and local boroughs maintain most of the roads).

All that is happening is that the Mayor is choosing to spend large amounts of money on cycling, on his "healthy streets" projects, on expensive remodeling of gyratories (past ones have introduced congestion where none existed before), on massive subsidies to bus travel when nowhere else in

the country does this take place and while removing budgets from local London boroughs.

This is not a formula that will please Londoners who understand what is happening, nor improve TfL's financial position.

**Comment:** Unfortunately Sadig Khan is turning out to be as financially incompetent as his predecessors (of all political persuasions). For political objectives (such as ensuring re-election) they give hand-outs to the population of London. Free travel in many cases, or frozen (i.e. uneconomic) fares and spending large sums of money on their pet projects such as cycling support and bridges with little or no cost/benefit justification.

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## More Money For Cycling

Sadiq Khan, Mayor of London, has announced a commitment to spend £142 million on new cycle routes. He claims this will benefit cyclists and pedestrians, but why the latter is not clear.

These are the routes where money will be spent:

**Lea Bridge to Dalston** - This 3km route would link the City and Waltham Forest by filling the gap between Lea Bridge Road and Cycle Superhighway 1 at Dalston.

**Iford to Barking Riverside** - This 8km route would link two bustling outer London town centres and a major growth area with up to 10,800 new homes and a new London Overground connection - while enhancing access to the Elizabeth line and London Overground services.

### **Hackney to the Isle of Dogs** -

This 8km route would stretch from Hackney to the Isle of Dogs via Canary Wharf, Mile End and Victoria Park.

**Rotherhithe to Peckham** - This 4km route would link Peckham with key and growing destinations such as Canada Water and Surrey Quays, and connect up other cycling routes such as Quietway 1 and the proposed Cycle Superhighway 4.

### **Tottenham Hale to Camden** -

This 8km route would connect major town centres and will cover seven junctions identified as being among the 73 with the worst safety records.

### **Wembley to Willesden**

**Junction** - This 5km route would be north-west London's first major cycle route, connecting Wembley, Stonebridge Park and Willesden Junction. Future sections will connect to planned infrastructure in west London such as CS9 and CS10.



The Mayor has also committed to providing a new river crossing between Rotherhithe and Canary Wharf for pedestrians and cyclists. Note that we commented on this project in a previous newsletter. It is surely a financially unjustifiable project, but needless to say the Mayor says the initial analysis of the consultation results shows substantial support – surely a case of folks voting in favour of something when they think they don't have to bear the cost.

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## Cycling (Cont.)

Note that the Mayor has committed to spend similar sums on cycling, if not more, over the next 5 years – an average of £169 million per year. Meanwhile budgets for road maintenance have been cut and projects put forward by local boroughs are being cut back. As usual these days, there is no cost/benefit justification provided for this expenditure.

It is not clear what the nature of these cycle routes will be. Will they be fully segregated as are the Cycle Superhighways or simply minor improvements such as blue paint and junction improvements? It seems some of the routes may be partly on “Quietways” (i.e. back roads with little traffic).

But one thing is for sure from past experience of similar projects. Road space will be removed from motorised traffic and traffic congestion will increase as a result.

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London: £4,155  
West Midlands: £3,029  
North West: £2,439  
South East: £1,307  
East Midlands: £1,134  
East of England: £1,134  
South West: £984  
North East: £855

**Comment:** Unfortunately this is the result of the London-centric political scene and the fact that the key decision makers (politicians and civil servants) tend to live in London and the South-East. Certainly the economics of Crossrail 2, and even Crossrail 1, in terms of the cost/benefit have been dubious in the extreme.

## London is Pampered while the Mayor Whinges about Lack of Money

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, is repeatedly saying that he does not have enough money to support his transport plans and develop high quality public transport services. This is very clear from two previous articles in this edition – on the ULEZ finances and on the Mayor’s Business Plan for the next few years. But in reality, London gets more money than all other parts of the country.

Both ITN National news and the Sun covered a report by think tank IPPR North. They said that per person London gets twice as much as the North.

HS2 shows the same effect – enormous expenditure just to enable a few business people to get from/to London somewhat quicker.

But the road network in the South-East gets less investment than in the North, with most of the money going on train and underground schemes beloved by the central London intelligentsia. A more rational approach would make a lot of sense, but there is no sign of either major political party taking the lead on this subject. They are both stuck in past ways of thinking.

The specific figures for transport funding in London are: £4,155 per person versus £1,600 as an average for all other regions. In some areas such as the North East and South West it is less than £1,000 per person.

Those “up north” in such major conurbations as Leeds and Manchester are complaining of gridlocked roads and very poor services on public transport which is the result of this lack of investment.

A typical example of the bias is given as the decision by the Government to fund the Crossrail 2 scheme in London at a cost of £30 billion, while electrification projects in Wales, the Midlands and the North were scrapped or downgraded. The Government disputes the analysis by IPPR.

The breakdown by region according to IPPR is as follows (infrastructure spending from 2017/18 onwards per person):



## Follow us on Twitter

To get the latest news and comment on traffic and transport issues in London, you can follow us on Twitter.

Our Twitter handle is **@Drivers\_London**

Any new ABD London blog posts are notified by Twitter and you can of course respond with your own comments.

## London Plan Meeting

I attended a meeting on the 1st February hosted by the GLA on the London Plan. It was in Bexley Civic Centre in Bexleyheath. The lead speaker was Jules Pipe, Deputy Mayor for planning, regeneration & skills. Someone later asked who elected him – nobody of course – he was appointed by Mayor Sadiq Khan.

There were a number of other Greater London Authority staff present who had worked on the London Plan including Gareth Fairweather from Transport for London (TfL). I spoke to him later and gave him my views on the London Plan and the Mayor's Transport Strategy.

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when most trips can be done by walking, cycling and public transport (the Mayor's target is 80%).

2) The main purpose of streets is surely to assist the movement of goods and people. While the London Plan and the Mayor's Transport Strategy seems to want to turn them into places for social interaction and exercise. Please justify.

Answer: Different roads have different purposes. Some might be used for movement while others might best be classed as "places". Comment: George Orwell made it plain how changing the language can turn black into white. So defining a key road junction as a "place" (such as Bank junction in the City) enables closure of the road to traffic.

One speaker made a good comment on the provision of housing in Bexley.

There were about 100 people in attendance, local councillors and the general public who could afford to spend three hours in the daytime to attend. After the initial presentations, which were somewhat boring although planning policies always are, there was plenty of time for comments and questions from the audience.

It was clear there was wide opposition to the London Plan with particular concerns about the densification of the local borough (although there were also concerns about affordable housing provision), the restrictions on parking provision, the difficulty of accommodating more people and houses without more infrastructure (in schools, hospitals, etc), and the prejudice against the use of cars.

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Apparently a former Planning Inspector decision suggested that only 450 new homes per annum could be built in Bexley due to limits on infrastructure. But the Mayor's London Plan is ignoring that and insisting on 12,000 more homes.

Another speaker talked about the lack of hospital provision and other infrastructure. The nearest A&E if you live in Bexley is Woolwich or Dartford. They could be 30 minutes or more away. There was also a problem with water supply.

One particular vociferous Irishman suggested that cycling up hills in the borough would be exceedingly difficult.

Those attending were encouraged to submit responses to the public consultation on the London Plan. (See the preceding article for how to do that and a link to what the ABD has already submitted).

Theresa O'Neill, Leader of Bexley Council, said they would be "sending back a robust response" to the consultation on the London Plan. Let us hope other London boroughs do the same. Another councillor said that Mayor Sadiq Khan does not understand outer London.

I asked a couple of questions:

1) Why does the London Plan (and the speakers at this event) talk about car dependency when using a car is simply a rational choice? It's a prejudicial term and would not be used to describe people over-reliant on their cycles (as members of the panel might be)?

Answer: it's just a term to describe excessive emphasis on using cars



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As the speaker from the GLA pointed out, there will be an independent review by a Planning Inspector so it's possible notice will be taken of comments in the final version of the London Plan which will dictate policies in London for the next few years (unless Mayor Sadiq Khan is ejected when his re-election becomes due).

He is surely not going to get much support from the residents of outer London boroughs if the meeting described is anything to go by.

As is usual with these events, this was hardly a meeting where TfL were paying much attention to the views of the public. It was just a meeting for TfL to tell you what they have already decided to do.

Roger Lawson



## Mayor's Transport Strategy - Feedback

We have received a lot of comments from the general public on our campaign against the Mayor's Transport Strategy. Many were not aware of what was proposed and those particularly concerned were the elderly and disabled. This is a typical example recently received:

*"I've just received your leaflet re the above and I'm aghast at the mayor's proposals you've listed. I rarely use my car to pop to the local shops, preferring to walk, for the exercise. "*

There are of course enormous numbers of elderly and disabled people living in London who often rely on cars and PHVs (minicabs) for day to day transport. Suggesting most of them can walk or cycle is simply nonsense and even using buses can be impractical for them due to the instability of such vehicles.

In addition, there are large numbers of ladies who feel insecure walking the streets at night and using public transport can be seen as risky.

Another group of objectors are those running small businesses who have to transport goods and those with large families who do a "bulk" shop at a supermarket once per week. The load that results is too large to carry other than in a vehicle.

*However, it's much more convenient and quicker to drive to the nearest swimming pool (for more exercise!) than it is to get the bus (which I know I could do). I also do the weekly shop once a week after swimming and this would not be possible without using my car. I know I could do it online but I prefer to choose my own products - and anyway it still requires a vehicle to do the delivery!*

*I certainly don't see why I should pay more than I already do for this!*

*We also get frequent visits from carers who help look after my wife - a lot of them use the bus but some of them use cars and I think it would be unfair for them to have to pay more.*

The Mayor's Transport Strategy focuses on the young and healthy who have office jobs in central London to which they commute via public transport, or are fit enough and willing to cycle in all weathers, while it ignores a very large proportion of the population. It needs to be scrapped and a new plan put forward!

Roger Lawson

## City of London Wants Your Views

The City of London Corporation, who control the streets in the City, want your views on their transport strategy. They have mounted an exhibition that runs until the end of March and there are some "drop-in" sessions also



*Perhaps you would be kind enough to send me the link to the relevant detail and proposed timetable for implementation and also details on how to object please."*



where you can talk to their staff. In addition they would like you to complete a survey. See the link at the foot of this page to go there.

**If you work in the City or travel there on business, please make sure you complete the survey.**

You might wish to state you oppose road closures, and you will also find the survey requires you to indicate a hierarchy of priorities for road usage – cars, PHVs, buses versus cyclists and pedestrians.

This is a very divisive approach. It should be a question of what is an appropriate balance in different locations and at different times.

*Continued on next page.*



### City of London Consultation:

<https://www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/services/transport-and-streets/Pages/transport-strategy.aspx>

## City of London (Cont.)

The City of London's transport strategy is still being developed but it's interesting to look at the proposed Strategy Board Members.

The Strategy Board is dominated by City Corporation staff, GLA representatives, and by representatives of financial institutions (what do the latter know about transport issues?). There is not a single representative of road users such as taxi drivers, PHV drivers, private motorists (the ABD has certainly not been invited), freight owners or even cyclists.

**Comment:** Regrettably this is a typical example of how the City Corporation is biased and staff in the relevant department seem to want to close down all the roads if they could.

## Sadiq Khan Decides PCNs Will Increase

Back in September 2017 Transport for London (TfL) announced a consultation on proposed increases in the level of PCN charges. They proposed to increase the fine for not paying the Congestion Charge, and for red route and other infringements, to £160 from £130.

That's a 23% increase which is much higher than inflation of course.

As we said at the time, this 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. In addition it will also help the Mayor's budget with which he continues to have problems.

Sadiq Khan decided to proceed with the proposals as they stood, despite the fact that the public consultation results showed a great deal of opposition.



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The full report on that is available on the web. For example, there were 7,411 responses to the consultation (including one from the ABD of course). Many of them came from central London boroughs but there were also a large number from outside London.

TfL analysed the main issues raised by respondents and there were over 4,000 which criticised the proposals on various grounds. Only 265 responses were supportive of the increase, with another 325 making alternative suggestions. In reality that demonstrates there was widespread opposition to the change from the general public and even among "stakeholders" a number of concerns were expressed. The lack of data to support the proposal was also criticised.

But Sadiq Khan and TfL rejected all those comments and decided to go ahead regardless.

That's how democracy works in London.

The Mayor decides he needs some more money, does a token "consultation" and then does what he proposed in the first place. It's called a dictatorship.

### The Congestion Charge

One of the interesting comments in the report in response to criticism of Mr Khan's motives for increasing the charge was that £1.9 billion in net revenue was generated by the Congestion Charge over the last fourteen years. This was fed into "on-going investment in the capital's transport infrastructure" it says, but then goes on to say that £1.5 billion of that was spent on improvements to the bus network. In other words, the vast majority of the income surplus was used to subsidise the losses on London buses where usage continues to fall.

So motorists (and goods vehicle owners) are continuing to pay through the nose to subsidise public transport and other programmes from which they get no benefit.

Instead of funding for road network improvements, all we get is funding to make it worse – such as the millions spent on cycle superhighways.

**Postscript:** It seems this proposal may not go ahead after all. It needs to be approved by the Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling. He has written to Sadiq Khan saying the evidence did not support the change and the proposed increase was neither necessary nor reasonable.

Will this be a stalemate or will there be a typical political compromise? We will have to wait and see.





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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](http://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](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](http://www.freedomfordrivers.org) (or [www.abd.org.uk](http://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](http://www.freedomfordrivers.org) web site.

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Go here for membership information: [www.freedomfordrivers.org/membership.htm](http://www.freedomfordrivers.org/membership.htm)