

# ABD London News

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## Editorial

This edition focuses on air quality issues, 20 Mph zones (or maybe 15 Mph in the City of London), cyclist's behaviour and the line-up for the next battle over who gets the job of Mayor of London in 2020. Conservative candidate Shaun Bailey is pictured right and see the article on page 12.

One of the reasons why the Government has mandated Clean Air Zones (CAZs) for many cities is the failure to comply with current legal limits on NO<sub>2</sub> (nitrogen dioxide). That gas was judged to have a major impact on life expectancy from past scientific studies even though it is difficult to separate out the impact of NO<sub>2</sub> from other pollutants such as particulates. Now COMEAP, the Government sponsored authority on this subject, have published a report that questions the impact of NO<sub>2</sub> with committee members taking varied

views on whether it has any impact on health at all.

It would seem that Government policy is being driven by dubious or uncertain science. But drivers on the roads of major cities will be facing big cost increases as a result.

Birmingham's CAZ is shown as being poor value for money based on an economic appraisal by the local Council with overall negative costs of minus £122 million as a "net present value". So just as with the extended ULEZ in London, we are seeing decisions being taken to pursue hopelessly unjustifiable attacks on air pollution.

Roger Lawson (Editor)



## Quotes of the Month

*"I will scrap the costly expansion of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone, and use the money instead to fund a clean bus fleet, saving Londoners money and cleaning up the city's air.".....Shaun Bailey, See article on page 12.*

## Some Comments in Response to the ABD's Campaign against the MTS:

*"We need to stop this idiotic law, so many people will face financial hardship and property owners will be getting huge bills just for tradesmen turning up."....D.G.*

*"The Mayor of London is just grabbing at any straw to save his plan to ban vehicles in London. It is a panic action to save face when we can all see his plan zero means zero quality of life for Londoners".... K.B.*

*"His proposal to extend the ULEZ to the north and south circulars is quite simply absurd and reckless."...K.C.*



## Air Quality and Vehicles: The Truth

The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) has been very concerned of late with the misinformation that has been spread by the national media about the impact of air pollution from vehicles on the health of the population. We believe it is not a major health crisis but simply a major health scare fed to a gullible public by journalists wanting a story. The ABD has now published the truth.

The promotion of such stories has also led to Government over-reaction and a number of local councils proposing "Clean Air Zone" schemes aimed at restricting some vehicles from entering some roads, or charging them extra to do so in the name of reducing pollution.

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But air pollution does not just come from vehicles but from many other sources of human activity such as heating, industrial processes, farming, building, cooking and domestic wood burners. Only about 50% comes from transport. The air outside is typically cleaner than in people's own homes or in offices and that is where they spend most of the time.

Removing all air pollution would be economically very expensive and leave us with no transport (buses, trains, aeroplanes or cars) and also stop all deliveries of food and other goods. You would not want to live in such a world.

We give all the evidence on our claims above in the aforementioned paper.

London is in the forefront of charging drivers using pollution as an excuse (e.g. from the ULEZ), but many other cities are planning similar schemes.

The prime objective often appears to be simply the desire to extract money from car drivers and other vehicle users. The ABD has now published a full analysis of the issues that actually gives the truth about the claims made for air pollution, and rebuts many of the allegations. It can be downloaded from the link below (cover of document to the right):

Is there actually a public health crisis? The simple answer is NO. The evidence does not support such claims.

In reality air quality has been steadily improving and will continue to do so from technical improvements to vehicles.

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But the ABD does accept that air pollution does need to be improved, particularly in certain locations, and we recognise public concern about it.

However we argue that measures taken to improve matters should be proportionate and cost effective. There needs to be a proper cost/benefit analysis before imposing restrictions or charges.

There are many measures that can be used to reduce vehicle emissions without restricting motorists or imposing major extra costs on them.

There is certainly no need to panic over air pollution!

### AIR QUALITY AND VEHICLES: THE TRUTH



The impact of road transport on air pollution and how to improve it.

Published by:  
the Alliance of British Drivers (ABD)



Meanwhile life expectancy has been increasing. There is no public health crisis! Life expectancy might be improved slightly, for example by a few days if all air pollution was removed.



### BBC Coverage of Air Pollution

The BBC have broadcast a couple of items recently on air pollution that were very biased.

One piece of propaganda was a television report that air pollution may affect your brain. This was based on a recently published Chinese study that long-term exposure to air pollution "could be linked to cognitive performance". As is common with air pollution studies, this was based on an epidemiological study that showed that people who have lived in heavily polluted areas for a long time show less cognitive function on simple tests of math and verbal skills.

*Continued on next page.*

#### Air Quality Paper:

<https://www.freedomfordrivers.org/Air-Quality-and-Vehicles-The-Truth.pdf>



## Air Quality (Cont.)

The study also suggested that there are differences in the impact between sex, age and education of the study participants which seems unexpected but they explain that as being affecting mostly men who have worked outside for long periods. The study was done in China where air pollution is of course a serious problem – for example Beijing has much worse air pollution than western cities such as London. The paper was published by the US National Academy of Sciences.

There is of course no evidence linking the possible causes to the effect and it could simply be that

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Note that there have been a number of scientific studies of a possible link between blood coagulation and air pollution but no clear conclusions about which pollutants are relevant and no specific link to heart disease or stroke risk have been identified. That did not stop Dr van Tulleken alleging such a link.

He then moved to Kings Heath High Street near Birmingham. This road exceeds national legal limits for NOX apparently by a small amount at some times. It is used by a large number of diesel buses (no hybrids or electrics), and by significant numbers of HGVs. Traffic is stop/start with high congestion because of traffic lights that are not linked and road side parking as people move in and out of the parking spaces.

Dr van Tulleken persuaded the local council to suspend the parking bays for a day (filled with bay

the selected participants suffer from the work they did, or the lack of mental exercise they took (cognitive functions decline if not used).

In summary, the scientific paper is just that and it is wrong to extrapolate it to suggest people in London or other cities are likely to be affected. Or is the report explained by BBC reporters spending too much time standing on College Green near Parliament Square, where they like to do interviews, and breathing in too much hot air? It certainly seems to be the case that talking about air pollution too much damages your brain.

### **Fighting For Air – Another Piece of Air Pollution Propaganda from the BBC**

trees instead) and to synchronise the traffic lights to provide a “green wave” and he also persuaded the bus company to offer free tickets. The result was the volume of traffic remained the same, but NO<sub>2</sub> fell by 10%. It is not clear to what extent any adjustment was made for other factors such as weather changes although mention was made that the changes were measured against wider area changes.

Local shopkeepers were not happy particularly a butcher who had traded in the road for 50 years.

Comment: In summary all this programme showed is that smoothing traffic flows may significantly reduce some emissions from vehicles. We already knew that, for example from studies of speed hump schemes. Replacing road side parking by off-street parking is clearly something that councils should look at.

On 19/8/2018 the BBC broadcast a programme on air pollution entitled Fighting for Air. It was presented by Dr. Xand van Tulleken in a populist and dramatic style.

He first did a simple test by “cleansing” his system by donning a chemical weapons suit followed by 3 hours of deliberately breathing in traffic fumes. He did blood pressure tests, analysed blood composition and checked for brain function before and after. This unscientific and uncontrolled test apparently showed a slight increase in blood pressure and blood clotting and possibly a very small change in cognitive function. Bearing in mind that such tests can vary significantly from hour to hour, this proves nothing at all.



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This write wishes that removing such parking be done in my local High Street (Chislehurst in the London Borough of Bromley) which has been proposed in the past but never progressed (there is already plenty of off-street parking). It would both reduce the air pollution and reduce congestion by improving the flow of traffic.

What the programme did not demonstrate was that air pollution is a major health hazard or a public health emergency as the Doctor disclaimed. Indeed the High Street Butcher demonstrated how much cleaner his shop is than it used to be suggesting particulate emissions were lower than a few years ago.

In conclusion, another disappointing and hysterical programme on air pollution rather than a truly balanced study of the issues.



## Beech Street Closure

The City of London Corporation is still keen to tackle the problem of air pollution in Beech Street – this is the road that runs underneath the Barbican in a tunnel and is a key east-west route within the City. The only other alternative routes are via Old Street or City Wall which are both heavily congested. But Beech Street is one of the most heavily polluted roads in London for NOX emissions.

There are several options being considered. That includes restricting the road to Ultra Low Emission Vehicles (ULEV) only, closing the road in both directions (but leaving access to the Barbican car parks) or just closing in the East-West or West-East directions.

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It is surely one of the most paranoid attacks on all forms of transport vehicles ever proposed. It includes the following proposals:

- A City-wide speed limit for all vehicles of 15 mph, with Intelligent Speed Adaptation (ISA) being used in all buses and public service vehicles to enforce it.
- Priority given to pedestrians, even over cyclists, in most of the City's streets.
- Encouraging the Mayor of London to implement a central London zero emission vehicle zone, or if he does not doing it themselves for the City, i.e. only electric vehicles would be permitted.

Traffic modelling of the possible closures is being considered but it would require building a large new model of traffic flows. But the impact of a full closure is already known because in March 2018 the road was closed for 5 days. Average journey times on the roads north and south of Beech Street increased by 23%. The report on this subject which is being considered by Corporation Committees notes the likely objections from many City business and residents to any closure.

**Comment:** It would be unfortunate if yet another key road in the City is closed to traffic. The road network in the City of London has been degraded substantially in recent years by road closures such as that of Bank Junction. Could the air pollution in Beech Street not be tackled by forced ventilation? But there is no mention of that in the Corporation's report.

- Reducing vehicular traffic by 25% by 2025.

- Expanding the City's cycle network with wider cycle lanes.

As I said in my previous report on consultation meetings for the development of the Transport Strategy: "The road network will be degraded in the alleged interests of cyclists, pedestrians and environmental dogma". One of the "key themes" that the Corporation's officers say came out of these events were that motor traffic levels on the City's streets are too high. That's not how I recall the meetings. There were more concerns expressed about dangerous cycling than road traffic. There was of course no mention of a wide-area 15 mph speed limit in any of their meetings or consultations.



## City of London Becomes Paranoid: It's 15 MPH Everywhere

The City of London Corporation, who govern the square mile, have published their proposed Transport Strategy.



Bearing in mind that the vast majority of City workers do walk to work from main line or underground stations, and that some locations are overcrowded, improvement in pedestrian facilities does make some sense. But ignoring the needs of vehicle users is wrong. Very few people drive in the City unless they need to. The City is even going to discourage taxis and PHVs and it is going to work with TfL to reduce the number of buses. Likewise there are proposals to reduce the number of service and delivery vehicles in the square mile.

The proposed 15 mph speed limit is surely not going to be complied with, and that applies to pedal cyclists as much as vehicle drivers.

*Continued on next page.*



## City of London (Cont.)

It is very difficult to drive a car at 15 mph or less consistently if for no other reason than vehicle speedometers are not accurate or easy to read at very low levels. The only reason it might be complied with is because of traffic congestion which reduces vehicle speeds already to below that level for much of the time. But I would also question whether such a limit is legally enforceable. Signs to indicate that limit would be required but there are no legally approved signs of that nature (only 20, 30 etc.).

Driving vehicles at less than 15 mph will of course increase air pollution so it's also contradictory to their other transport policies.

Potholes are a major menace to cyclists and she points out that unlike for vehicle drivers, potholes are not just a route to a repair shop, they are a risk to life and limb. I am sure that all road users will agree that potholes have become a major problem as expenditure on road maintenance and proper resurfacing has been cut back by local councils.

But she says an under appreciated risk is other cyclists who are "comfortably the diciest fellow users of the road". She describes most of them as "infuriatingly rubbish and some would struggle to pass a primary school proficiency test". She reports that they run red lights, don't signal before they swing into your path, don't use lights in the dark and barge in front of you at traffic lights. There is much more in the same vein.

The City Corporation will be undertaking a public consultation on their Transport Strategy in November. Readers are encouraged to respond to it.

In the meantime, the City's Planning and Transport Committee confirmed that the closure of Bank junction will be made permanent despite that fact that numerous vehicle drivers are clearly not aware of the restriction and collect a fine from driving through it.

Roger Lawson

### 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/>

She also criticises pedestrians and car passengers who open doors without looking, but she does not wish to put off anyone from cycling! You can read the full article on the FT's web site. We hope she does not get too many abusive comments from her fellow cyclists.

### Cycle Passing Limit and Disclosure of Evidence

One ABD correspondent has written to the ABD about the fact that he received a Notice of Intended Prosecution about a claimed offence of passing a cyclist too closely in North Wales, which he denies. The police are claiming to have evidence based on a headcam worn by a cyclist but are refusing to disclose the video evidence or even a transcript of a statement given by the cyclist.

## Cycling in London, and Cycle Passing Limits

There are a number of cyclists who avidly read the ABD London's blog. Many of them are critical of the issues we have raised about the standards of cycling in London in a number of articles. It was very amusing to read an article in the Financial Times on the 29th September by Katie Martin. She is an FT writer and she gives the views of someone who has been cycling to the office for the last nine years.

She said cyclists would be wrong to assume the main threat was cars, and she highlights two others as of importance: the road itself and other cyclists.



Firstly, headcam or dashcam footage can be used as evidence in criminal cases if some conditions are met. As regards disclosure of evidence, the police certainly need to disclose the evidence if they intend to pursue a prosecution. Perhaps the Police are relying on people accepting a Fixed Penalty Notice rather than going to court to challenge the case, but that would be most dubious.

As regards the distance that vehicle users should allow when overtaking a cyclist, the Highway Code says the following: "Give motorcyclists, cyclists and horse riders at least as much room as you would when overtaking a car" and "Give them plenty of room and pay particular attention to any sudden change of direction they may have to make".

*Continued on next page.*



## Cycling in London (Cont.)

This is somewhat unspecific as some drivers might feel they need not give much space when overtaking another vehicle at slow speeds.

One can see that any prosecution might be difficult based on those parts of the Highway Code. So cyclists have called for more specific limits, e.g. 1.5 metres, or perhaps 1.0 metre on roads with lower speed limits.

Ireland proposed to introduce such a law but it was abandoned after realisation that it would create legal difficulties. The Department for Transport is currently considering the matter in the UK.

But in this writer's view, any specific limit is not sensible. In central London, where streets are narrow, and traffic speeds are low, giving 1.5 metres would not be easy and might simply lead to encroachment onto the opposite carriageway thus creating other road safety risks. Likewise on some of the narrow country roads in North Wales. A wide limit on high-speed dual carriageways or other A-roads may be quite appropriate but equating it to the road speed limit rather than the speed of a vehicle and its size makes no sense. Larger vehicles that create much bigger back drafts are more of a risk to cyclists and drivers of those need to allow more space.

Perhaps the Highway Code should be reworded to try and clarify what is a reasonable passing distance but any specific limit

seems unwise because it very much depends on the circumstances. The ABD will respond to any public consultation on this issue if one appears.

In the meantime, it seems some Police Forces are using "Careless Driving" offences to try and enforce specific passing distances and are even offering "education courses" as an alternative to taking the points and fines. That is much the same way as they offer speed awareness courses which the ABD is campaigning against (see our AMPOW campaign at <https://www.speed-awareness.org/> ).

This is morally and legally dubious and should be strongly opposed.

Roger Lawson

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## First E-Bike Death

Another death of a pedestrian hit by a cyclist was reported in London on the 12th September. Ms Sakine Cihan was hit by a cyclist using an electric bike on Kingsland High Street when attempting to cross the street. She died two weeks later in hospital. This is believed to be the first death of a pedestrian after being hit by an e-bike in the UK. But it is of course another symptom of the growing problem in London of unsafe cycling which we have commented on before.

The cyclist in this case abandoned the bike soon after the incident so it was a typical "hit and run" case but a man was subsequently arrested by the police.

E-bikes are legally limited to 15.5 mph but can allegedly go faster if pedalled at the same time. The comments of a spokesperson for Cycling UK said "The statistics show cyclists, whether on a conventional or e-bike, present a minimal danger to others". How fast can an electric bike go? A report of a recent legal case over one that was stolen from a premier league footballer (it cost £8,500), noted that it could reach 43 mph according to the manufacturers web site.

Comment: I certainly would not like to be hit by a cyclist travelling at 15.5 mph or even higher. The fact that the cyclist ran off afterwards tells you that he realised he had not been riding in the most responsible manner. Reckless cycling and at excessive speed can be seen on the streets of London every day. More such accidents will happen unless this problem is tackled.

## Number Plates for Cyclists

It was Ken Livingstone who first advocated that cyclists should have number plates on their bikes. That was back in 2006 but he did not progress the proposal. Since then cycling behaviour in London has got considerably worse. But a south London school is going to make its pupils display a number plate. This is in Carshalton in South London. Headmaster Amit Amin said that pupils have been cycling in a way "that endangers themselves and others". Cycling pupils will be given a number plate which they must display when riding to and from school in future. It brought a rather predictable response from a spokesperson for Cycling UK who suggested it might deter cycling by "making it more difficult".





## 20 Mph Zones Are a Waste of Money, or Worse

The Sun Newspaper has reported on the success, or rather failure, of 20-mph area speed limits, to cut accidents.

Rod King and 20s Plenty are like all fanatics – they ignore the negative impact of their policies and fail to see the truth. They are blinded in their zeal to reduce speed limits in the false presumption that reducing speeds are the answer to all road safety problems. But cutting road casualties is not as simple as that. We still await a Government report on a more comprehensive study of 20 mph schemes.

In London, TfL continue to finance such schemes in local boroughs and must have spent millions to date on them. Another example of unwise policies and reckless expenditure by TfL and Mayor Sadiq Khan.

It is a great pity that money was not spent on road engineering to improve the safety of roads and junctions.

They have obtained figures from 20 local councils using the Freedom of Information Act where £11 million of taxpayers' cash was spent on the lower limit. But in some cases, rates of serious accidents (Killed and Serious Injuries – KSIs) have actually gone up they reported.

AA President said that the schemes were a “waste of money”, effectively implying that if the money had been spent on other road safety measures, more lives and serious accidents would have been saved.

Examples the Sun gave were Bath where £804,000 was spent but a 2016 report revealed that the KSI's went up in 7 out of the 13 zones where speeds were cut, and in Manchester £1.7 million was spent on a heavily criticised scheme while in Hampshire other schemes gave no benefit.

The Mayor actually wants to impose 20 mph speed limits on many major roads in London under his “Vision Zero” road safety plans. UKIP Transport Spokesperson Jill Seymour has challenged TfL to provide undisputed evidence of the justification for such proposals.

She said “The authorities have strangled the main roads, and made them the most congested and slowest of any city in Europe. London is a mess when it comes to transport. The London authorities, led by Sadiq Khan, appear to have a vendetta against personal transport and the car, and do everything they possibly can do to discriminate against it”.

That's definitely the truth of the matter.

The ABD has of course reported similar problems before including in the City of London where a blanket 20 mph scheme has resulted in more minor injury reports, so they now want to reduce the limit to 15 mph!

20s Plenty founder Rod King called the articles “sloppy journalism”. 20s Plenty has tried to debunk the reports of a number of local councils on their 20 mph schemes – for example they called the Bath report “biased, lacking in statistical rigour ...”.

But anyone who has surveyed all the evidence on such schemes will know that simply putting up signs typically reduces traffic speed by only 1 mph and has no great impact on road casualties. In reality it seems to have the opposite effect in many cases as pedestrians no longer take so much care when crossing the road.



## Lewisham 20 MPH Limit Failing

The London Borough of Lewisham introduced a borough-wide 20 mph speed limit in 2016 – apart from a few major roads. But not surprisingly it is failing to change drivers' behaviour who continue to use their intelligence to drive at what they consider an appropriate and safe speed. As a Council report says “As the general look and feel of the roads has not changed many drivers continue to drive at the old 30 mph limit”. The Council report also says that speed “reductions have been relatively small” which is similar to other signed-only schemes.

*Continued on next page.*



## Lewisham 20 Limit (Cont).

Lewisham Council now want to spend £1.2 million on a number of measures to enforce the 20 limits. That may include speed humps, chicanes, build-outs and speed cameras, although they have not firmed up exactly what measures would be used and on which roads. Roads likely to be targeted are Downham Way, Brockley Road & Southend Lane.

They intend to progress those proposals despite the fact that they only have preliminary figures for speed reduction and no data at all on the resulting impact on personal injury accidents. Nor are they bothering to wait for a Government commissioned study on the effectiveness of 20 mph speed limit zones.

Neither is there any cost/benefit justification for these proposals. Slowing traffic costs money in the wasted time of vehicle passengers. It also creates more air pollution because vehicles driven at slower speeds cause more.

Lewisham are clearly one of those boroughs dominated by anti-car policies and without any consideration of what is rational or sensible.

## Blanket 20 MPH Speed Limit in Richmond

The London Borough of Richmond is proposing to introduce a speed limit of 20 mph on all roads in the borough with two exceptions.

The only exceptions will be the A205 and A316 which are TfL controlled roads. The claim is that this will reduce the number and severity of road accidents but that is contrary to the evidence that has been appearing on that issue—see preceding article.

This will be a “signed-only” scheme so it is very unlikely to have any significant impact on traffic speeds (typically 1 mph on other such schemes which nobody can notice) and even less impact on casualty figures. A public consultation is now open where you can give your views on this proposal. See the link below to go to the consultation.

**Please make sure you respond as soon as possible!**

Here are a few comments received from a an ABD correspondent :



“Utterly disgusting. There are key main roads (including 40mph roads) included in this. The recent pedestrian accident rate published only a couple of weeks ago showed how LB Richmond had some of the lowest rates, as did other non-20 areas, while blanket 20 areas were amongst the highest – yet they claim this will ‘reduce casualties’.

They show total disregard for the fact they will be incriminating men, women, parents, old people, young people, and those who drive for a living.

They show hatred towards the bus passengers most likely to suffer from longer journey times.

This is the policy of society’s biggest cretins”.

### 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.

## Projects With No Benefit – Rotherhithe Bridge and HS2

When evaluating capital projects, it is wise to estimate the benefit/cost ratio (“BCR”), i.e. the likely value attached to the benefits divided by the overall costs. That is the best way to evaluate differing projects so one can pick the best ones. Those with a negative ratio are clearly not worth doing.

*Continued on next page.*

### Richmond 20 MPH Consultation:

[https://www.richmond.gov.uk/council/news/press\\_office/older\\_news/september\\_2018/consultation\\_on\\_borough\\_wide\\_20mph\\_limit\\_launched](https://www.richmond.gov.uk/council/news/press_office/older_news/september_2018/consultation_on_borough_wide_20mph_limit_launched)



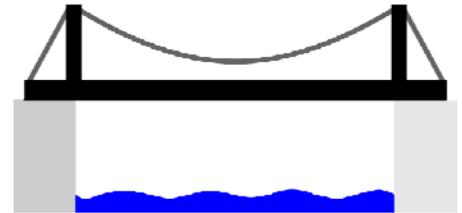
## Projects With No Benefit (Cont.)

The DfT's "Value for Money" guidance says a project will generally be regarded as "medium" value if the BCR (Benefit/Cost Ratio) is between 1.5 and 2; and "high" if it is above 2. The Eddington transport study of 2006 said the BCR for trunk roads was 4.66 and local roads 4.23. When there are so many possible projects that give high benefit/cost ratios, why bother with lesser ones? It's just a misuse of public money to do so.

Transport for London (TfL) have published their response to the results of their public consultation on the proposed new Rother-

hithe/Canary Wharf crossing. This is a vanity project of the latest Mayor, rather like Boris's "garden bridge".

This bridge would only be useable by cyclists and pedestrians and the favourite plan now is for a bridge rather than a tunnel or a ferry. However the bridge would need to have a lifting section to allow for river traffic. How the bridge might be funded is still not clear (possible cost of well over £300 million was previously estimated including running costs over the life of the bridge). When it comes to the benefit/cost ratio for the proposed bridge it is estimated to be between 0.7:1 to 1.97:1. In other words, it might actually be negative and will be unlikely to be a "high" return project. Even those figures assume very high usage of the bridge by cyclists and



pedestrians but it is justified on the encouragement to cycling and walking that it would provide – and hence is consistent with the Mayor's "healthy streets" policy.

In summary, this bridge is not justifiable in relation to other transport projects and knowing the Mayor's budget problems it is simply unaffordable anyway.

Time to kick it into the long grass surely before more money is wasted on it?



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### HS2

In comparison to the aforementioned bridge, the HS2 high-speed rail line is a mega-project of the first order. Likely cost is now more than £80 billion with major disruption in London and many other parts of the country. Local Transport Today (LTT) have published details of a leaked report by Paul Mansell, a Government-appointed advisor. It's a very damning assessment of the value of the project. It seems his report was not shown to Government ministers before Parliament voted to proceed with the project.

Back in 2013, the benefit/cost ratio of HS2 was calculated by the Government to be 2.3. What it is now, after a major escalation in costs, is not at all clear. But it seems that the only justification for continuing with it is the possible boost to the economy that

might be needed if a "hard" Brexit is the outcome. Surely this is another project that should be canned sooner rather than later, simply because there are better things to spend the money on – and that includes not just railway lines.

It is of course fortunate that we have some benefit/cost information on the above two projects. TfL (and the Mayor of London) now often fail to provide such information. The ULEZ scheme is an example of a wildly negative scheme if examined.

It is unfortunately a symptom of the modern trend to make major public policy decisions on irrational grounds. They just need to sound appealing to a few people (those who might vote for the politicians backing them), when economics should be the key decision basis.

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## Woolwich Ferry

The Woolwich Ferry has been closed pending replacement by two new ferry boats. The piers need adapting to take the new boats which have more capacity than the old ones. The three old boats needed replacing because they used to regularly break down. It is hoped the new boats will be in service in the New Year. This writer does recall taking the kids for a trip on the Woolwich Ferry many years ago rather than the Blackwall Tunnel. The driver of a car in front of me accidentally locked himself out of his vehicle, as one could easily do in those days. I envisaged being stuck on the ferry for some time as vehicles were crammed in as tight as possible. But another Ford car driver on the ferry tried his car key and it unlocked the vehicle. Car security systems have improved since then!



## Dartford Crossing Tolls Increased

An alternative to using the Woolwich Ferry now that it is closed is the Dartford Crossing. The cost to use the bridge/tunnels on the M25 was increased from the 1<sup>st</sup> October. The charge for cars for those who are pre-registered rises to £2.00 from £1.50.

The justification given for this change is that the Government is spending £10 million to reduce congestion at or around the Dartford Crossing and that it will provide a more “equitable rate between different vehicle classes”.

Pre-registering is of course very worthwhile because apart from the discount you get, it avoids you having to remember to pay the toll. But the discount is now reduced.

Many people who regularly use the crossing are very annoyed about this increase. One of them, Jayne Phillips, has created a petition against the increase on the 38Degrees web site.

Note that when the charges were first imposed on the Dartford Crossing to pay for the new bridge the Government promised that the tolls would be removed after the bridge had been paid for. That has never happened and charges have been going up instead.

Don't trust any Government to keep their promises!

The Dartford Crossing is one of the few major bridges or tunnels that are tolled in the UK. The tolls should be removed. **Please sign the petition.**

## ANPR Use in London – Big Brother in Operation

A recent report on the Mayor-watch web site said that Transport for London (TfL) expects to take 21 million ANPR images each day to enforce the Congestion Charge and ULEZ zones. Expansion of the ULEZ to the North/South circular will require many more cameras not just on the border of the zone but within it to catch those who only drive within the ULEZ zone.



TfL expects to catch as many as 138,000 cars/vans and lorries using automatic number plate recognition (ANPR) technology.

The police do have access to this system so you can see exactly how extensive the surveillance of the population of London will soon be.

There will be an additional 2,172 cameras for the expanded ULEZ when London is already one of the most heavily populated areas in the world for surveillance cameras.

These extra ANPR images will cost a capital figure of £1.2 million to upgrade the server to connect to the National ANPR System and a further £555,000 per annum in support/mainten-

ance costs to London's Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC).

**Comment:** this is a typical result of the desire for road pricing and revenue raising – privacy just goes out the window.

## Bus Network Reduced

Transport for London (TfL) have published plans that will reduce bus services on 33 routes. This will particularly apply to little used services in central London which are alleged to contribute to traffic congestion and poor air quality. The 33 routes represent only 6% of London's bus routes and in some cases the route is simply being shortened.



Another reason for the reduction is that bus usage has been dropping lately and there is the issue that while the deficit on TfLs budget is rising, buses are still massively subsidised. This is surely a sensible step to rationalise the bus network. If you might be affected by these changes, there is a public consultation on them.



## Public Consultation on Cycling Offences

The Government have announced a review of cycling offences and a public consultation on what they propose to change. This follows an increase in the apparent numbers of cyclists who ride “furiously” and cause harm to pedestrians or other cyclists.

The Department for Transport (DfT) have reported that in the last five years (to 2016) there were 2,491 accidents involving pedestrians and cyclists with no other vehicle involved which resulted in 20 fatal pedestrian casualties and 546 serious injuries (source: LTT).

### It is clearly not a trivial problem.

He said “Adding one or two new offences specific to cyclists would be merely tinkering around the edges”. He called for a wider review of road traffic offences. Olympic medallist Chris Boardman said “That says it all really. Wow, just wow. I genuinely thought this was a bad joke, had to check it was a real account” and called for other cyclists to complain. Cyclists seem to hate being subject to regulation so it seems likely that cyclists will oppose the proposed changes.

As the consultation on this issue points out, cyclists are not subject to licensing and do not have to carry insurance. They are not subject to points totting up, nor of disqualification from cycling, although they can be disqualified from driving vehicles.

A particular concern was the recent case of Charlie Alliston who killed Mrs Kim Briggs on Old Street in London. He was acquitted of manslaughter but convicted of the Victorian offence of causing bodily harm by “wanton and furious driving” for which he received a sentence of 18 months in prison. The maximum sentence for that offence is 2 years.

It was realised that there is no equivalent to the offence of “causing death by dangerous driving” that vehicle users face. There is effectively a gap in the law as regards cyclists.

The Government’s proposal is to introduce “parity” of sentencing options where the outcome is death or serious injury. They are also proposing other minor changes – for example to make cycling offences apply to any public area, not just roads. That might cover car parks and pedestrianised precincts.

One concern is that cyclists are silent and are no longer required to have bells to warn of their approach (they were before 2011). When they persist in riding on pavements many people are concerned about them being hit from behind without warning. It is interesting to note that the DfT will soon be mandating noise generators for electric vehicles to protect pedestrians so why not introduce the same rule for cycles?

There may be other ways to improve cyclists’ behaviour such as cycle speed limits or controls on the type of cycles that can be used, but a change in attitude is really what is required. More consideration for others and less libido.

**Comment:** In principle it would seem to make sense to introduce parity as a deterrent to bad behaviour by cyclists. This seems to be a particular problem in London where cyclists often travel at high speed on their commute to/from work and don’t like to slow down at all. They often seem to try to emulate their racing cycle heroes and record their journey times on the web. See the past articles on this topic on the ABD London Blog. It is becoming a serious problem in London which many people have commented upon in the media articles written on this subject.

Whether introducing parity in offences will actually improve the behaviour of cyclists seems questionable however.

The immediate reaction of Cycling UK spokesperson Duncan Dollimore was to dismiss the proposals.



The ABD will probably respond to the formal consultation on this subject so please let us have your comments. Or of course you can submit your own comments directly.

Roger Lawson

### A40 Correction

In our previous newsletter there was an article on the reduced speed limit on a section of the A40 that was supposedly a temporary limit for safety reasons. It was stated that the reduction was from 40 mph to 30 mph, but in fact it was a reduction from 50 mph to 30 mph according to one of our correspondents. By the time you read this, the temporary limit is likely to have been raised.

## Sadiq Khan Popularity Falling Rapidly

According to a poll commissioned by Queen Mary University of London (QMUL) and published recently, London Mayor Sadiq Khan's popularity has dropped dramatically. In March 2017, he had a net positive satisfaction rating of +35 which is quite exceptional but that has disappeared. Overall the rating is still positive, but only just. Now only 44% think he is doing well versus 40% who say he is doing badly. The Mayor's rating is now negative among working-class Londoners, the over-50s and those in Outer London.

What is the reason for this decline? It seems likely that the ABD's campaign on the Mayor's Transport policies is having an impact as we continue to deliver hundreds of thousands of leaflets across London.

The Mayor's policies such as the ULEZ will particularly affect those groups where his rating has been declining most sharply. Folks are waking up to the Mayor's attack on all forms of private transport – not just cars but motorcycles, PHVs (minicabs) and taxis and the costs that they will incur as a result.

Other contributions have probably been his mismanagement of Transport for London's budget which is heading for a massive deficit and has been focussed on by some politicians, and his record on tackling rising crime levels in London has also been criticised. Similarly, his record on housing is no better than his predecessor and very different to what he promised. His promise to freeze public transport fares and improve public transport which he made to get elected have been shown to be mistakes or unachievable. Surely the apt quotation here is "You can fool all the people some of the time, and some of the people all the time, but you cannot fool all the people



all the time" (Abraham Lincoln). Voters are now becoming disillusioned with the Mayor as he is seen to be good at rhetoric and photoshoots with children but bad at actually managing the metropolis.

London needs a Mayor who does not just spout fine words, but can actually tackle London's problems and get them solved.



## Shaun Bailey's Policies on Transport

The Conservative Party have selected Shaun Bailey as their candidate for Mayor of London in 2020, when Sadiq Khan comes up for re-election. He has served on the London Assembly since May 2016, and previous to that was a youth worker and advisor to Prime Minister David Cameron. He gave a rousing speech at the recent Conservative Party conference.

But what are going to be his policies on transport? His campaign web site is here:

[www.backbailey2020.com](http://www.backbailey2020.com) and it spells them out. We give a summary here. He intends to:

- Invest in London's transport to make sure there is more capacity and increased frequency of public transport to meet the needs of our growing city.
- Put driverless trains on tracks – he will put driverless trains on tracks, so that hard working Londoners are no longer at the mercy of militant unions.
- Protect the Freedom Pass – he will protect the Freedom Pass (no sensible politician would say otherwise surely).

*Continued on next page.*



## Shaun Bailey (Cont.)

- He will get a grip on road maintenance, and will fight for more control over vehicle taxes to help fund the boroughs and get a grip on London's potholes and road maintenance.

- He will scrap the suburban driving tax, i.e. the costly expansion of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone, and use the money instead to fund a clean bus fleet, saving Londoners money and cleaning up the city's air.

This looks a vote-winning agenda although I am not convinced that the Mayor should have control over vehicle taxes. This should be a prerogative of our national Government surely?

Roger Lawson

## Summary News Items

The following are brief notes on other news items in the last few weeks—some of them are covered on our blog.

### **Westminster Wins Legal Fight.**

The City of Westminster won their judicial review against Transport for London (TfL) over Cycle Superhighway 11. Judge Cranston said that the scheme's monetised costs outweighed the benefits by two to one.

### **Hackney Generating Cash**

**from Road Closure.** Hackney Council is raking in the money from camera enforcement after banning a left turn off Mare street into Richmond Road. The restriction only applies at certain times. This similar to schemes in Croydon and Bank Junction.

### **CPZs and Cycle Lanes in**

**Ealing.** The London Borough of Ealing is proposing to introduce emissions-based permit parking charges in their Controlled Parking Zones. Diesel owners will face a £50 surcharge and some residents will see a 60% increase in charges. The change will generate £700,000 extra in income to the council even though they already have a substantial surplus on parking revenue. Their aim is to reduce car use and encourage "modal shift". Local residents Simon Hayes is campaigning against the proposals and has organised a petition against them. What will be the actual impact on air pollution? Negligible is the answer.

There is also active opposition to new cycle lanes in the Green Lanes area of Ealing—see local campaign web site:

<http://saveourgreenlanes.co.uk/>

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## National Road Pricing a Step Closer

The likely proliferation of Clean Air Zones (CAZs) in many of the UK's cities with many of them introducing charging systems for non-compliant vehicles will lead to the widespread adoption of camera systems for enforcement. That is how the London Congestion Charge and the expanded ULEZ which will cover most of London is being enforced. In other words, cameras everywhere.

One inconvenience for drivers would have been the complexity of paying the charges if local councils all operated their own systems.

This is already a problem in London where there is no common registration and auto-payment system for the Congestion/ULEZ system and the Dartford Crossing on the M25. But the Government have already anticipated this according to a report in Local Transport Today who were told that the Government is setting up a central payment system to support the local authorities. It seems that local authorities will still have a role in enforcement however – that probably means they will be able to retain the profits they can make from fines which will of course make such systems even more attractive than they would otherwise be.

As the ABD said in our recent press release announcing the publication of the truth about air

pollution and vehicles, the prime objective [for attacks on allegedly polluting vehicles] often appears to be simply the desire to extract money from car drivers and other vehicle users. Local authorities will perceive this as a godsend to solve their budget problems.

A national system of collecting payment for local CAZs does of course mean that introducing a national road pricing system would be very easy – just need to put up lots of cameras. Indeed with most of the major conurbations covered by CAZ and charging systems, that's what we will have in place and ready to use for wider purposes.

Anyone wish to take a bet on that happening?





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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.

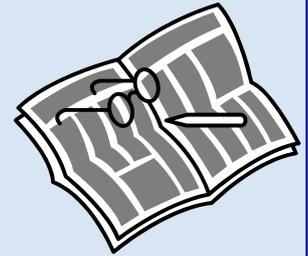
### About the Alliance of British Drivers (ABD)

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](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)



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The Alliance of British Drivers (ABD) is a national organisation that promotes the interests of road users. Please consider becoming a Member to help us promote your interests.

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