



Our role

What we do

[London TravelWatch](#) was set up by Parliament as the official voice of London's travelling public. We are funded by the Greater London Authority and are accountable to the London Assembly's Transport Committee. We speak up for all those who use buses, the Underground, the national rail network, Docklands Light Railway, dial-a-ride, trams, taxis, cable cars and river transport, as well as cyclists, motorcyclists, pedestrians and other users of London's principal road network.

Our aims

We aim to secure a better deal for everyone [travelling in and around London](#): Londoners, commuters, visitors and tourists, however they travel. We are the only consumer body to be completely multi-modal.

We:

- press for a better journey experience for London's travellers
- seek value for money on all transport services in the capital
- ensure that the particular needs of London and London's transport users are given due priority in transport policy and planning decisions
- help the travelling public understand their rights and find good deals by providing information and advice
- enable consumers to understand and exercise their rights when things go wrong
- work to ensure that transport operators deal with complaints appropriately and efficiently.

Representing passengers

We speak for passengers and the travelling public in discussions with opinion formers and decision makers at all levels, including local councils, the [Mayor of London](#), the [London Assembly](#), the Government, Parliament and the European Union.

Influencing

We regularly meet and seek to influence the relevant parts of the transport industry on all issues which affect the travelling public including timetables, routes, frequencies, fares, ticketing, station standards, access, vehicles, safety, personal security and the information provided both to passengers and to users of London's principal roads. We also work closely with a wide range of public interest organisations, user groups and research bodies to ensure that we remain aware of the experiences and concerns of the travelling public.

Researching

We commission and carry out research amongst consumers, and evaluate and integrate the research carried out by others, to ensure that decisions on transport policy and operations are based on the best possible evidence.



What we want for passengers

Investigating

We examine all appeals brought to us by people unhappy with the responses (or lack of them) that they have received from transport providers, and try to rectify problems or seek compensation where appropriate.

Analysing

We monitor the quality of services, including punctuality, reliability, crowding, congestion, cleanliness, accessibility, staff attitudes and behaviour, and station and waiting facilities. We seek to ensure that they meet the standards travellers expect and deserve. This all forms part of an intelligence-led approach.

Connecting

The above activities all contribute to our extensive evidence base. In addition, our experience of using London's extensive public transport network, paying for our own travel, and seeing for ourselves what transport users go through helps ensure we remain connected and up to date.

We think that:

- services should run frequently and reliably at all reasonable times of the day and week
- networks should provide good access, adequate capacity and easy and convenient interchange between different types of transport
- staff should be helpful, informed and committed to offering high-quality services
- information should be readily available, understandable, relevant, up-to-date and accurate
- tickets should be easy to purchase, use and understand, flexible, and integrated between different service providers and modes of transport
- stations or stops should be well-designed, properly maintained, fully accessible and offer a good quality waiting environment
- journeys should be safe and free from anti-social behavior, crime and the fear of crime
- streets, both footways and carriageways, should be clean, properly signed, uncongested and well maintained so that they can be used confidently by all, and especially by people with mobility or other impairments
- buses, trams, trains and boats should be accessible, comfortable, clean, safe, quiet, easy to identify, and suitable for passengers with mobility difficulties or travelling with luggage, shopping or children
- transport providers should communicate clearly and promptly with their users, be approachable and open to suggestions, take complaints seriously and have proper mechanisms for redress when things go wrong.



Chair's foreword

Stephen Locke, Chair



At the end of my first full year as Chair of London TravelWatch the problems facing transport users have never been greater, with ever more crowded services and pressures increasing as London's population heads towards 10 million by 2030.

We have played our part in ensuring major investment programmes have been safeguarded. Getting a good deal for passengers from these investments has been a significant priority for us this year. We have worked closely with Passenger Focus to give direct passenger input into assessment of the bids for two new rail franchises, Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern, and Essex Thameside, which account for almost 40% of London's

railway network. Here we have been breaking new ground, the first time passenger interests have featured so prominently in the franchising process.

But, whilst these projects will improve some services in the longer term, they will not benefit everyone. London TravelWatch has worked hard to promote consumer interests in a wide range of more immediate issues. We have continued to highlight the need for fully accessible bus stops and user-friendly interchanges and to point out the concerns people have about anti-social behaviour and its impact on the travel environment. We have also drawn attention to the frustrations faced by passengers wanting to use Oyster cards but unable to, such as on journeys to and from Gatwick Airport and towns just outside Greater London, and hope to see improvements made soon.

We have also promoted passenger interests in major initiatives that are still in the pipeline – for example we pressed Transport for London (TfL) to develop effective fallback mechanisms and staff training to help vulnerable passengers who are at risk of being left stranded when buses cease to accept cash.

Not all campaigns are winnable. We were disappointed by the Government's decision not to proceed with 'devolution' to the Mayor and TfL of franchising arrangements for the South East London area which could have paved the way for more frequent, higher quality train services. But there was agreement to a similar devolution package for West Anglia services from Liverpool Street, and this will provide an important reference point for the consideration of similar arrangements elsewhere.

This mix of complex and urgent issues would tax any organisation. But it is particularly challenging for a body of London TravelWatch's modest size and resources. I am extremely grateful to Janet Cooke and her staff, and to my Board colleagues, for ensuring that the organisation sets and follows a rigorous system of priorities, so that it works in a way that is lean, efficient and smart.



Chief Executive's report

Janet Cooke, Chief Executive



The year has been a very productive one. We continued to deal effectively with a large volume of casework, achieving successful outcomes for many individual passengers but also using what we hear to help secure wider benefits for all. Three new pieces of research added to our evidence base and are already helping to generate improvements as we use our insights into what consumers think to challenge the industry.

Our collective experience of using London's extensive public transport network, paying for travel and seeing for ourselves what transport users, particularly London's hard pressed commuters, go through also helps ensure we remain connected and up to date.

A strong ethos of wanting to improve the travelling experience for the people we represent underpins all our work and this is something that was highlighted during our Investors in People inspection. We were delighted to be accredited at the Silver level after our assessor concluded that the organisation is in excellent shape. Becoming one of the limited number of organisations to gain IIP Silver status is a real testament to the hard work and commitment of our staff who are to be congratulated on what they have achieved to date. However we want to improve further as an organisation and are already making our plans to do so.

We have another busy year ahead to ensure that the needs of people using all of London's different transport modes remain central as major service changes are implemented. We will be closely scrutinising London Underground's proposals to change the way it deploys staff in all its stations. We will continue to work closely with a range of different rail operators as the works on the second stage of the Thameslink programme continue, including the massive rebuild of London Bridge

station which will cause major disruption for passengers over the next four years. We will be working with operators as they prepare to take over new franchises on the Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern, and Essex Thameside routes and with London Rail as they prepare to take over part of the Greater Anglia franchise and bring Crossrail into operation. We will continue to speak up for passengers as new ways of paying for travel are introduced, including contactless payments and cashless buses. And in TfL's Year of the Bus, we will be developing a project to give bus passengers more of a voice.



Our achievements

Paying for travel

The level of fares and the ability to buy tickets easily are fundamental issues for passengers. We hear continually from people who are concerned about how and where to buy tickets, how to obtain refunds when necessary and how to appeal against penalty fares, as well as from those unhappy at the cost of travel. Whenever we do work with focus groups, whatever the topic, participants want to discuss high levels of fares before anything else. In addition to campaigning for fares to be held at a reasonable level, we give advice on best value fares and encourage transport providers to simplify and clarify their fare structures.

[Our research](#), *Value for money on London's transport services: what passengers think*, identified actions that operators need to take to improve the value for money consumers receive when using public transport in London. These included offering ways to spread the cost of an annual season ticket, better publicising benefits which come with season tickets such as Gold Card discounts and providing better information about the way Oyster Pay As You Go (PAYG) works. The research found that low cost but high visibility benefits such as

free access to toilets for ticket holders at stations and transport hubs, Wi-Fi at stations and measures to tackle anti-social behaviour on public transport would do a lot to improve people's journey experiences.

We supported the Mayor's plans for a part time season ticket but implementation of a scheme will pose significant challenges and we will scrutinise the details when these are available.

We welcomed the Government's decision to freeze a significant number of fares in real terms in January 2014 by only raising them by RPI. We highlighted the fact that in London some people stood to lose out from the withdrawal of off-peak paper Travelcards for zones 1-2 and 1-4 and the need for clear information about the alternatives available. We are concerned that with many people facing tight constraints on their incomes, and often having to travel long distances to work, fares are becoming increasingly unaffordable for many people.

While we recognised that TfL's [proposals for cashless operation of the bus network](#) had the potential to reduce costs and save time, we had a number of concerns about their proposals. [Our submission](#) argued that

removing cash as a means of payment poses significant problems for people in vulnerable situations. There will also be issues for passengers in areas where there are limited facilities to purchase or top up Oyster cards. We are pleased that TfL say they will be responding to our concerns by facilitating new Oyster outlets.

Our [research on passengers' journey experiences](#) showed that two years on from our [Oyster incomplete journeys research](#) there is still a need for clearer information about Oyster fares as large numbers of users do not properly understand how the system of charging and capping works. This means making a clearer distinction between peak and off peak fares and better explanation of how the daily cap works. It also means having validators that are easy to find and use and allowing passengers to resolve incomplete journeys at all stations where Oyster can be used.

The research also found that although passengers are confident about purchasing tickets for journeys they make regularly, when it comes to journeys which they are less familiar with, help and advice is often required. Passengers want staff at stations who are able to answer queries and resolve problems. However, this does not



necessarily mean that staff have to be in a ticket office as passengers' needs may be better served by roaming staff who are able to offer help and reassurance so long as staff are easy to find, visible, knowledgeable and empowered.

We cautiously welcomed the package of proposals announced by TfL as they put forward their vision for the future of the tube. Some of the changes proposed - notably 24-hour services on Fridays and Saturdays - will clearly improve things for passengers, as will increased frequency on some lines. However, the station staffing proposals, including the closure of ticket offices, will require particularly close scrutiny, especially in the light of our findings that passengers need more information and reassurance about contactless and mobile payment technology which is regarded as too recent and untested.

As a result of our representations, Southern Railway made improvements to their ticket machines which enabled passengers to buy a ticket from stations other than the station they were purchasing it from. This means that passengers who already have Travelcards or other tickets that cover part of their journey are able

to access cheaper, better value tickets without the need for a ticket office to be open. We are now trying to persuade other operators to make similar improvements, so that passengers can purchase the best value tickets from a variety of outlets.

Making a difference for passengers

Every year we investigate a wide variety of consumer concerns. Our work ranges from high-level scrutiny of policy to assisting individuals unhappy with the responses they have received from transport providers. Regular contact with transport users gives us the insights which underpin the independent, expert advice we give to policy-makers as well as informing our research and campaigns. When we can, having resolved an issue for an individual user, we will use their experience to argue for improvements which make a real difference for everyone.

Four years after we first took up the issue, [we secured a boost for Southeastern rail passengers](#) on the high speed line (HS1) from Kent who had previously been forced to pay extra to travel from St Pancras International despite having tickets which should have enabled them to travel

through the station to other London terminals such as London Bridge and Blackfriars stations.

We talked to TfL about the strategic impact of bus services in London, particularly in relation to Sunday services and access to healthcare, helping make the case for running Sunday services on routes such as the B12 in Bexley and 434 in Croydon that were introduced during the year. We also helped to make the case for the extension of routes 498 and 499 to Queen's Hospital, Romford.

We were also able to bring together Network Rail, the Department for Transport (DfT), c2c and the London Borough of Barking and Dagenham to finally bring into service lifts at Dagenham Dock station which were built as part of the HS1 project a decade ago but had been disused for eight or nine years.

On behalf of passengers we monitor performance data relating to all modes of transport in London. Our quarterly monitoring reports offer independent scrutiny of transport operators' performance from the passengers' perspective, highlighting areas of concern that we raise with operators.



Standing up for passengers

London TravelWatch responds to consultations from the Mayor, London Assembly, the Government, regulators and transport providers to ensure that the London travellers' perspective - which is often very different from that of passengers elsewhere in the country, given the nature of journeys taken and the pressures on capacity - is at the heart of policy-making. Decisions are being taken now which will set the framework for years to come and it is important for London's transport users that service specifications are right.

We [wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer](#) ahead of the Government's 2015/16 spending review to argue the case for maintaining a sufficient level of funding for public transport in the capital, pointing out that it is imperative that London's transport infrastructure does not stand still and keeps pace with growing demand for public transport. We followed this up with [letters to all London MPs](#), some of whom also wrote to the Chancellor to press the case for all who travel in London. We subsequently welcomed those elements of the spending review which will allow TfL to maintain a sustained programme of investment in London's transport infrastructure. We were also very pleased to see that provision was made for the electrification of the Barking to Gospel Oak line, a small but highly significant investment which will have a much wider impact for passengers than just this local line.

We remain concerned that restrictions on revenue spending may lead to cuts to some services used by London's travelling public. Bus routes are a particular concern as many are already congested and passenger growth is likely to continue on many routes. We will continue to work hard to ensure that all passengers' interests are properly safeguarded when key decisions are made.

We were disappointed with the Government's decision not to devolve to the Mayor responsibility for running services around London in the South Eastern franchise. But there was welcome news regarding devolution of responsibility for the lines from Cheshunt, Chingford and Enfield Town into central London to the Mayor. TfL will now have an opportunity to show what can be achieved from the new arrangements. We are pressing for an objective impact assessment of devolution on these lines as a guide to future decisions on responsibility for London's rail services.

[Our research on London's travelling environment](#) suggested that after fare levels and service reliability, the travel environment is passengers' main concern. They told us that anti-social behaviour and overcrowding were particular problems and can deter them from making journeys. Improved lighting, station design, CCTV coverage and litter picking on vehicles, stations or stops would also be welcomed by transport users.

We welcomed the publication of the Office of Rail Regulation's [final determination](#) of railway funding and its commitment to put passengers at the heart of Britain's railways and to work with passenger groups, including London TravelWatch, to amongst other things, determine how £1.2bn of ring-fenced investment funds should be allocated. However, we were disappointed that it did not provide incentives for Network Rail and train operators to work together and find new ways to improve accessibility at stations and we will continue to put pressure on the industry to do more in this area.

Our submission to [the London Assembly Transport Committee's investigation](#) into bus services in London highlighted the fact that although bus services are generally performing well in London, and this is

reflected in customer satisfaction scores, improvements must not be taken for granted, especially since London's bus passengers will continue to depend heavily on the quality and availability of services as the capital's population grows. The Committee's final report echoed many of the issues we raised in our submission, including our concern that TfL should link the way that it plans bus services with the work it does to give buses priority and this should cover the whole route, not just major pinch points, to help increase reliability and punctuality on all bus routes in London. We also successfully argued that TfL should be more transparent about the reasons for the decisions it makes. We will continue to work with the Transport Committee on this; in particular we will be monitoring TfL's progress in developing an improved measure of bus crowding and encouraging a more transparent consultation process.

Our response to the DfT's consultation on the South Eastern rail franchise called for service improvements, improved passenger engagement and better co-ordination with other operators during times of disruption. We also made the case for additional



calls in some services that pass through Denmark Hill and Peckham Rye, to provide access to Kings College Hospital, as well as the interchange with the East London Line. We are pleased to see that these, together with late evening services between Victoria and Dartford, are proposed to start in December 2014 but we will continue to push further on this.

In [our response to TfL's consultation on Crossrail 2](#), we noted that while both the metro and regional [options](#) fulfilled our general priorities for investment to reduce overcrowding, cut journey times and improve connectivity within and around London, the regional scheme offers notably more benefit to passengers than the metro scheme. We would therefore like to see the regional scheme being developed further and look forward to being involved during further consultation on potential route options.

Shaping services and improving access

We want Londoners and visitors to benefit from a wide range of transport options whether they want to walk, cycle or take the bus, train, tram or Underground. While great progress has been made, more needs to be

done to make London's transport networks accessible in the widest sense of the word. In all our work, we consider the needs of passengers with disabilities and recognise that most improvements for these groups also offer benefits to all.

[We published a report](#) which set out what we had heard from those who find pavement obstructions most problematic and called for TfL and borough councils in London to do more to get obstructions, particularly advertising boards, cleared from London's pavements. We are pleased that TfL are now committed to doing more to tackle this issue.

We welcomed the House of Commons Select Committee [report on access to transport for disabled people](#), particularly their recognition of the point we made in our [submission to their inquiry](#) that the state of the pavement is often the determining factor as to whether disabled people can contemplate a journey at all. We also supported the Committee's recommendation that the DfT's review of inclusive mobility should develop new ideas for providing accessible pedestrian infrastructure.

After years of campaigning to make sure that bus stops meet the needs of all passengers, the Mayor has now set TfL a target of making 95% of all London's bus stops accessible by 2016.

We welcomed the establishment of the Roads Taskforce with a remit to resolve the many conflicting demands of movement, commerce and 'place' on London's roads. We have particularly welcomed proposals for the reversion of some of London's gyratory systems to two-way working. We also made a strong case for the role of bus priority which has been accepted as a key theme by the Taskforce. However, we remain concerned that not enough is being done to address directly the problem of rising traffic levels and the associated congestion. We think a wide range of measures will need to be brought into consideration, including some difficult ones such as roads pricing.

We were pleased with the Government's plans to give passenger representative bodies a greater role in shaping the packages that are brought forward by train operators. We were invited by the DfT to contribute to the franchise analysis process for the Essex Thameside and Thameslink Southern and Great Northern franchise



reviews as part of a drive to ensure that passenger views are taken into account in the customer service sections of the bids. We look forward to working with the DfT and the industry to find ways in which improvements to value for money scores (value for money satisfaction scores are particularly low for London commuter rail services) can be brought about, and to encourage best practice from other industries to be incorporated into the culture and operating practices that currently exist.

We reviewed Crossrail station plans to ensure that they reflect the needs of passengers and have started to look at plans for HS2 stations as it is essential that enough access points are provided at Euston and that Old Oak Common is developed as a hub serving all of west London. This means, for example, ensuring that high speed trains stop there and there are good links with Crossrail and the Overground. We are concerned that some benefits of Crossrail may not be realised because of the lack of Crossrail services serving Heathrow Terminal 5. However, we are pleased that the need to improve the pedestrian route between

Euston and St Pancras stations is now being recognised as this is something for which we have campaigned for many years.

Our research showed that while passengers accept that information has improved in recent years they want more information which is tailored to their needs. We will continue to push for the industry to provide real time, joined up information and to make more use of apps and social media, which are often the most convenient source of information for passengers, especially at times of disruption.

We have continued to argue for improvements to passenger safety. We highlighted the clear responsibility operators have for passengers on stranded trains and the need to adopt a passenger perspective when dealing with trains that have broken down or are stranded, recognising that information needs to be provided early to passengers to ensure that they remain well informed and are given a clear indication that staff are aware of the problem and what is being done to remedy the situation. We continued to focus on the excessive gaps between the

platform and train interface to ensure that passengers are not put at risk when boarding or alighting from trains.

Engaging with transport users

To represent travellers in London effectively, we need to keep in touch with them and encourage them to share the results of their journey experiences with us. We aim to make it as easy as possible for the travelling public to contact us, whether through casework, at our public meetings and events, or via our [website](#) and social media. We regularly monitor our website to ensure that it is as up to date as possible and that the frequently asked questions reflect the queries that passengers are raising with us.

Our Board and committee meetings, at which we discuss current issues in transport, explore problems and look at future services, are open to the public. Topics this year have included Crossrail 2, cashless buses and rail devolution. The public were also able to put their questions to London's Transport Commissioner, Sir Peter Hendy, via traditional



and social media and our members visited TfL's Contact Centre to better understand local passenger experiences. Although the need to prioritise our resources limits what we can do, over the year we engaged with most of the transport groups in our area and we visited Bexleyheath and Edmonton Green to hear first hand from local people about their transport concerns.

Our performance

During 2013-2014 our casework team dealt with almost 6,000 written and telephone enquiries and complaints. Most of these could be dealt with quickly

or passed on to the operator for an initial reply, as we only investigate cases where the complainant has not already received an adequate response. We investigated 1,100 appeals from members of the public travelling in London and the surrounding areas.

The vast majority of our cases concerned service performance including delays and early departure, penalty fares, lack of available information at point of travel and complaint handling by rail operators.

Following our Investors in People assessment in February 2014 we were delighted to not only retain our accreditation but to also get a Silver award,

a level achieved by fewer than three per cent of organisations recognised by the Investors in People scheme.

Our funding

London TravelWatch is funded by the London Assembly in accordance with Schedule 19 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. In 2013-14, our total income amounted to £1,111,718 and our total expenditure was £1,089,850.

Our full audited accounts are available on our website: www.londontravelwatch.org.uk

Other numbers



We cost each London council tax payer less than 1p a week



We represent the interests of passengers in and around London, who make more than 13m journeys a day (around 6m by bus, 4m by tube and 3m by National Rail)



Of the casework which required further investigation:
57% related to National Rail,
10% related to buses,
9% related mainly to Oyster,
5% related to London Underground,
and 19% related to other queries

Making a difference for passengers

The following examples summarise some of the key achievements already mentioned in this annual review showing how we follow through the public's concerns to improve the overall passenger experience.

You told us



We did this



This was the outcome



Passengers using Southeastern's HS1 services from Kent had been forced to buy additional tickets at St Pancras International despite having tickets enabling them to travel through the station to other London destinations like London Bridge and Blackfriars.

We took up this case on behalf of passengers, arguing that the passengers had made the purchase in good faith to travel on HS1 via St Pancras and onwards to the Thameslink stations and were able to show that these tickets could still be purchased online.

Southeastern and First Capital Connect reprogrammed their ticket barriers, having agreed that passengers travelling on an HS1 ticket could finish their journey at any of the London Terminals stations.

Our value for money research showed that there was little appreciation of the value and benefits which come with annual season tickets.

We called on operators to improve awareness of what is on offer.

Operators are beginning to produce leaflets and posters to better publicise the benefits of season tickets.

Our [research on passengers' journey experiences](#) showed that two years on from our [Oyster incomplete journeys](#) research there is still a need for clearer information about Oyster Pay As You Go fares.

We pressed operators for a clearer distinction between peak and off peak fares, a better explanation of how the daily cap works and to make validators easier to find and use.

Operators are making the signage around Oyster card validators more obvious and TfL produced detailed pricing tables to clearly show peak and off peak pricing at each London Underground station.

About us

Our people

Members of London TravelWatch are appointed by the London Assembly.

Board (as at 31 March 2014)

Chris Brown
Richard Dilks
Glyn Kyle
Stephen Locke (Chair)
Abdikafi Rage
John Stewart
Ruth Thompson (Vice Chair)

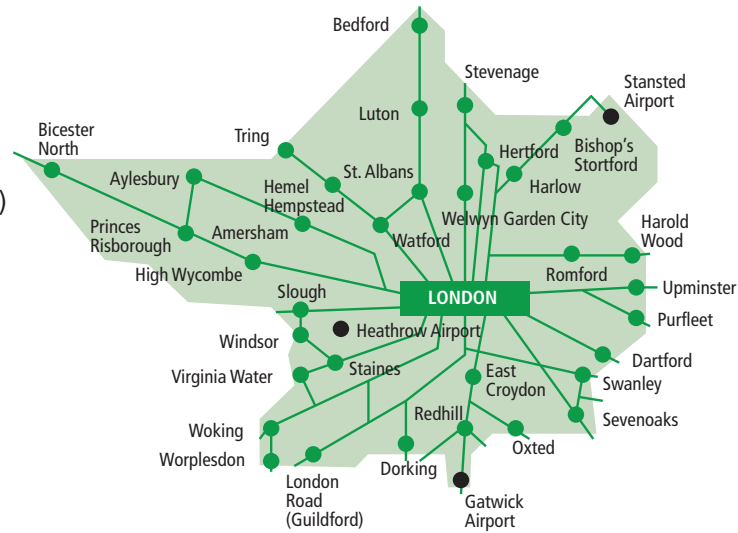
Thank you to former Board member, Josephine Channer who stood down during the year, for her contribution to the organisation's work.

Staff (as at 31 March 2014)

We employ 12 full-time and nine part-time staff:

Sandra Ambo
Keletha Barrett
Tim Bellenger (Director, Policy & Investigation)
Mike Brown*
John Burgess
Gytha Chinweze
Janet Cooke (Chief Executive)
Margaret Croucher
Jaskiren Deol
Peter Ellis
Richard Freeston-Clough
Rob Gifford
Susan James (Casework Manager)
Patrick Kenyon
Sharon Malley
Robert Nichols
Angela Okello
David Rose
Mike Spittles
Vincent Stops
John Wooster
*joined this year

Thank you to John Cartledge, who retired this year after almost 40 years with London TravelWatch and its predecessors. We would also like to thank Wendy Stevens and Andrew Totten who left us during the year, as well as Sarah Lewis, Gabrielle Kearns and Mushtaque Khan for the contributions they made during their six month secondments from Network Rail.



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