



The voice of transport users

# Interchange matters: passenger priorities for improvement

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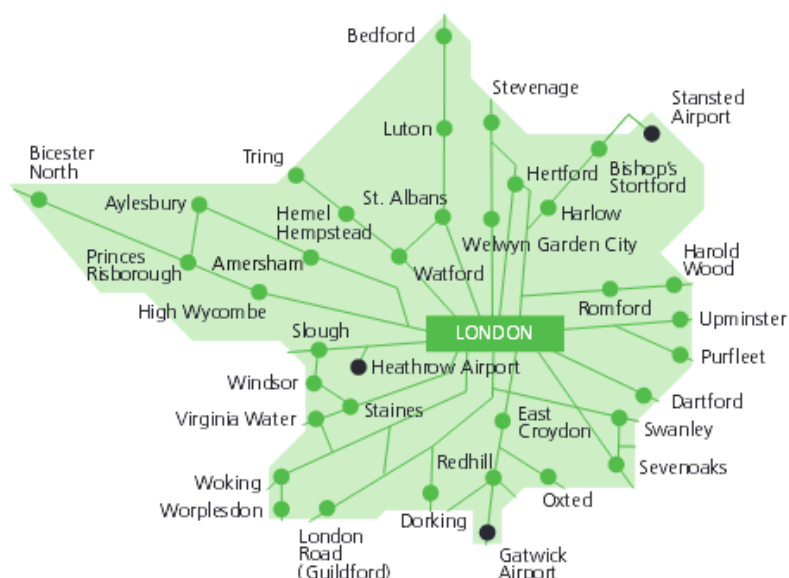
**London TravelWatch** is the independent, multi-modal body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public. This includes users of rail services in and around London, all Transport for London (TfL) services (bus, Tube, DLR, trams, taxis) and motorists, cyclists and pedestrians using London's strategic road network. We are funded by and accountable to the London Assembly.

#### Our approach

- We commission and carry out research, and evaluate and interpret the research carried out by others, to ensure that our work is based on the best possible evidence
- We investigate complaints that people have been unable to resolve with service providers – we get more than 6,000 enquiries a year from transport users and in 2014-15 we took up 2,300 cases with the operator because the original response the complainant had received was unsatisfactory
- We monitor trends in service quality as part of our intelligence-led approach
- We regularly meet with and seek to influence the relevant parts of the transport industry on all issues which affect the travelling public
- We work with a wide range of public interest organisations, user groups and research bodies to ensure we keep up to date with passenger experiences and concerns
- We speak for the travelling public in discussions with opinion formers and decision makers at all levels, including the Mayor of London, the London Assembly, the Government, Parliament and local councils.

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.

Our aim is to press in all that we do for a better travel experience for all those living, working or visiting London and its surrounding region.



## Foreword

A great proportion of travel across London's transport network involves one or more interchanges. We change from bus to train; from tram to bicycle; from suburban rail to coach to airplane; from River Bus to our own two feet. We can change, often unknowingly, from the services of one transport operator to another. We walk from one Tube line to another. We may change from a taxi to the Tube at smaller stations in outer London, or from Tube to National Rail services at major London terminals.



Time spent at an interchange is essentially 'involuntary time' because having to interchange will always be second best to using a direct service, so the more convenient the change the better. However the need for good interchange is not just to make life a little easier for individual passengers; good interchange is vital for London, particularly in the context of the capital's growth. Providing and promoting opportunities for passengers to interchange without the need to travel unnecessarily into central London helps to optimise the use of London's public transport network by relieving congestion. Whichever way you look at it, interchange matters.

Imagine a five star interchange:

- Passengers can change seamlessly from one mode of transport to another, there is level access from bus to street to platform to train floor; navigating within and around the station is easy to do; and there is sufficient room for movement even in the busiest periods of the day.
- Where signs are needed, they are of good quality, in the right places, clearly visible, meet a consistent industry standard, but are bespoke to the location. Comprehensive information for all transport services, including local map-based wayfinding, is available at appropriate locations in and around the interchange to enable passengers to easily continue their journey. Travel advice is available at a central location from staff who are well informed about all of the services provided at and around the interchange, and who can help passengers when things go wrong.
- Passengers feel safe in and around the interchange. There is no graffiti or accumulation of litter, and the presence of staff is reassuring. The facilities and amenities are convenient and easy for everyone to use, making the interchange a place where passengers feel comfortable spending their time.

These are the standards to which the industry should collectively aspire and there are interchanges where many of these elements can be found.

However, in too many locations, including at London's major rail terminals, interchanging is not easy and passengers have a poor experience. Sometimes it will not be possible to provide for every aspect of a 'five star' interchange due to conflicting demands, the historic nature of the station and cost, but all too often there are also institutional reasons for a poor interchange experience for passengers. A failure to collaborate and to see things from the passenger perspective can mean that simple adaptations and facilities are not provided. Improving interchanges does not necessarily require a lot of costly infrastructure works, but rather a willingness to see things from the perspective of a passenger unfamiliar with the location needing to navigate through an interchange.

The transport industry showed what it could do during the London 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, when all transport operators worked together to provide an integrated, single service under the banner *One Team Transport* and it is this kind of approach that is necessary to drive improvement. There is a particular need for improvements in the current environment when a combination of passenger growth and massive construction projects (both transport and non-transport) has created problems across the network. At times, even those familiar with the capital, can find themselves confused and disorientated.

With its multi-modal remit and many years' experience of hearing from passengers about how their journeys do not turn out as well as they had expected, London TravelWatch is ideally placed to identify how the passenger experience of using London's numerous interchanges could be improved. We have always promoted and prioritised good interchange, researching into many aspects of interchange and working with the industry to promote improvement. There have been successes, but also disappointments. This report brings together the many strands of work that we have undertaken previously, together with new focus group research that reaffirms what passengers priorities are for a good interchange.

Alongside this report, we have developed an evaluation framework to rate interchanges on a scale of one to five stars. We will use this to raise awareness of what is needed at London's interchange stations to improve the journey experience for passengers. We will carry out as many assessments as we can and make detailed recommendations to the relevant managers. However our resources are limited and we hope that others – passengers, user groups, local authorities, transport operators and Network Rail – will also use our checklist to assess the quality of their own local interchanges. This resource is available from the *interchange matters* section of our website.

We will be launching a new interchange blog where people can share their feedback and we will give regular updates on our own progress in challenging and persuading the industry to work collaboratively to put passengers' needs at the heart of their service.

**Stephen Locke**, Chair

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# 1 Executive summary and key recommendations

The purpose of this report is to give a passenger perspective on the importance of interchanges to London's transport network, at a time when capacity is under pressure from economic and population growth, and congestion can be a significant deterrent to travel. It highlights what passengers say is best practice to produce a good journey experience.

The report concludes that:

- Improving existing interchanges and facilitating new ones enables better and more efficient use of existing resources and capacity on London's public transport network
- The passenger experience can be significantly improved by better co-ordination between providers and operators
- Continuing investment in accessibility measures benefits all passengers using interchanges
- Improvements in layout, information, signage, staff training and visibility help passengers make better decisions about their journey choices thereby improving overall satisfaction.

**Better information should be provided to help passengers identify the most convenient points to interchange and to help them navigate around the interchanges**

- TfL and the Association of Train Operating Companies (ATOC) should improve the way they show interchanges on their joint *London's Rail and Tube Services* map so that it is clear:
  - where stations on different lines are only a short walk apart so passengers could choose to interchange there without having to travel further along the line
  - where passengers can make an interchange between two different stations without paying an additional fare
  - where passengers need to leave one station and walk along the street to interchange
- All station entrances should be well signed so that they are clearly visible from a distance
- Signage that is easy to read, simple and of a consistent design should be provided in sufficient quantity to help guide passengers as they interchange from one transport service to another or navigate their way through National Rail major London terminal stations
- All signage should be bespoke to its location
- Kiosks, shops and freestanding advertising boards on station concourses should be not be sited where they block the passenger view of the train platforms or station exits or where they get in the way of people walking through the station
- When major construction works obstruct the normal walking routes in and around interchange stations then high quality temporary signage



should be provided. This temporary signage may need to be revised during the works to ensure it remains relevant

- When services are disrupted passengers should be given information about this as early in their journey as possible so they have the chance to interchange at a different place in order to avoid the problem.

### **Improvements are needed in customer service at interchanges**

- Information at interchanges should be easy to find, clear, comprehensive, appropriately located and include details about other transport services and maps of the local area
- Staff should be well trained, easy to find and available whenever services are running
- All staff should be able to help passengers buy tickets to any destination and to answer queries about all transport services running in and around the interchange, regardless of who they are operated by
- Where more than one operator serves an interchange, they should jointly designate one person to take charge overall of coordinating services to customers
- Interchanges should be free from litter, rubbish and graffiti

### **Investment is needed to:**

- continue to make stations and bus stops step free and to make other accessibility improvements
- ensure that all interchange points have adequate shelter, lighting and seating, and, as appropriate, toilets
- expand the provision of 'Countdown' bus stop information at bus stations and bus stops associated with rail and underground stations, with the ability to report scheduled departures where this is the start of a bus route(s)

### **Station management agreements in the franchise system should be improved**

- All new franchises and concessions let by the DfT and TfL should:
  - require all passenger-facing staff at interchanges to be consolidated under one management system to provide a seamless integrated service
  - use the principles set out in this report as the basis for establishing how interchange stations and stops should be improved by operators in the early years of new awards
  - incentivise operators to work with others to continually improve the quality of interchange stations and stops throughout the award.



## 2 Interchanges and their importance for passengers

London boasts one of the most extensive public transport networks in the world. Every weekday millions of passengers change from one service to another during the morning peak period at one or more of London's interchanges. Within such a vast and multi-modal network, interchanges help to maximise journey opportunities, and the ability for passengers to interchange easily is crucial. As TfL confirms, the delivery of a 'simpler, more convenient and better quality transport interchange is an essential element of improved integration. As this is achieved, journeys by public transport become faster, easier, safer, more reliable and enjoyable.'<sup>1</sup>

### What is an interchange?

Interchange happens when passengers break their journey from A to B to change onto a different vehicle or mode of transport. At its simplest, a passenger may only need to get off the bus and wait for another at the same bus stop, or get off one train and wait for another on the same platform. Hopefully, the information at the stop or platform will confirm that the other bus or train will depart from that same place and when it will depart.

Interchanging gets more complicated if the passenger needs to go to a different bus stop or platform, or leave the station to catch a bus or a tram. However, this can still be easy as long as the appropriate stop or platform is clearly visible from the point at which passengers alight from their first bus or train, and as long as each stop or platform entrance clearly states which services will depart from there. The fact that the next stop or platform is not immediately visible will not be a problem for passengers provided that its location is clearly signed.

At the other end of the spectrum are the potentially far more complex interchanges. Some of these are based around London's major rail terminal stations, while others include points served either by several different modes of transport or by services run by several different operators. The interchange experience becomes even more challenging at larger, busier interchanges, especially during peak times, and even more so at locations where there are as many passengers arriving as leaving so that crowds of people are trying to go in opposite directions.

Within this spectrum, further complications arise if passengers are unfamiliar with the location, or if they need to walk some distance between their arrival and departure points. What is considered as the boundary of an interchange may vary according to the proximity of nearby services. For example, passengers may need to walk for five minutes from a rail station

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<sup>1</sup> Transport for London (2015), *Interchange*

to reach a bus stop, just as they may need to walk for several minutes through London Underground stations to transfer between Tube lines. Indeed, by definition an interchange incorporates the station or stop itself, as well as the local area immediately around it.

Interchanging can become even more difficult for people with reduced mobility, those travelling with young children or carrying heavy luggage, especially if they have to negotiate steps. Other problems arise for sensory impaired passengers if the edges of platforms or staircases are not clearly marked, passenger announcements are inaudible, or badly placed, flickering, flashing or generally inconsistent lighting adds confusion.

Passengers will think of an interchange as a single entity and expect it to be managed as such. They want the same high quality of service whether the interchange is managed by London Underground, a train operating company or Network Rail. Unfortunately the absence of common standards of operation between different operators can mean that passengers using other transport services are denied the full range of facilities that would be available to them if the station was managed by the operator they were travelling with. Ideally, all staff working in and around interchanges would know about the services of other operators as well as they know about their own so they could give accurate and comprehensive information to all passengers.

### **Making interchanging easier**

Even at the most complex interchange, good layout, signage, management and relatively minor improvements to the infrastructure can make a big difference to the passenger experience. Clear layout and signage will not only make it easier for individual passengers to find their way from one means of travel to another, it will also help to ease congestion by reducing the number of people walking through areas they have no need to use. In addition, it will cut down the need for passengers to stop and double-check directions, often getting in the way of others while they do so.

Making it easier for passengers to interchange without having to travel into central London can mean a shorter overall journey time, while not having to travel via Zone 1 will make the cost of their journey cheaper. Strategically, this will help reduce congestion in central London, thereby maximising the efficiency of the whole public transport network.

### **Integrated ticketing**

Another important aspect of interchange relates to fares and ticketing. Passengers interchanging in London do enjoy one major advantage which, at the moment, is not really available elsewhere in the UK - TfL's smart ticketing system of Oyster and Contactless bankcard payments. Accepted for travel on National Rail services as well as TfL services, this allows passengers to freely change between almost all modes of transport within the London zonal fares area without the need to purchase separate tickets.

Increasingly, the electronic tickets used by train companies outside the London area (such as Go Ahead's 'key' card or c2c's 'Smartcard') are also accepted for travel through London on any mode. Accordingly, we make relatively few references to ticketing issues in this report. However, to help even more passengers benefit from such seamless ticketing arrangements, we continue to lobby for Oyster/Contactless payments to be accepted more widely. In particular, we want this to be introduced for passengers travelling on the Heathrow Express and, outside the existing zonal fares zone, on services to key destinations such as Gatwick Airport Station, Luton Airport Parkway, Epsom, Dartford and Slough.

## **Producing this report**

Over the years, London TravelWatch has had extensive feedback from passengers about how travel in and around London is not as seamless as it should be, despite the highly integrated nature of travel in the capital. We spend a lot of our time negotiating with transport operators, decision makers and providers to try and improve the quality of London's interchanges and the time is right to set out in more detail what is needed from the passengers' perspective for an interchange to receive a five star rating.

This report concentrates on the aspects of integrated travel that do not work for users as well as they should. We focus on three broad aspects of interchange: the physical characteristics of stations and stops, onward travel, and the staffing and management of interchanges.

Throughout the report, we use the term interchange to apply primarily to stations or stops where it is possible to change from one mode of transport to another ('inter-modal' interchange), or from one service to another within the same mode ('intra-modal' interchange). Intra-modal interchange includes transfers from, for example, one London Underground line to another or from one bus service to another. Interchange also includes transferring to and from active modes of travel such as walking and cycling. All of London's major terminal rail stations are interchanges.

We believe that some operators have given more consideration than others to interchange quality but we want all of the transport industry to pay similar attention to the quality of the interchanges they operate. Hence, throughout this report, we highlight both good and poor practice. The recommendations in this report show how interchanges may be improved.

## **Our evidence base**

In producing this report we have drawn on a range of evidence; including our own previous research, the experiences of passengers who contact us, our discussions with the industry over many years and our own expert observations.

In addition, to supplement this, we commissioned AECOM to undertake focus group research asking passengers about their priorities for good interchange. The research enhanced our understanding of what passengers want and need when using interchanges, and helped us develop a mystery shopper evaluation form.

The specific objectives of the AECOM research were:

- To provide an understanding of interchange needs from a passenger perspective
- To determine the key attributes within each of the interchange dimensions to be assessed
- To help guide the development of the evaluation framework by considering the relevance and importance of our proposed evaluation criteria.

Discussion in the focus groups covered the many aspects of interchange:

- Accessibility
- Layout and information
- Facilities
- The quality of the surrounding area and streets
- Local travelling environment
- Onward journey information
- Walkable interchanges
- Travelling to and from London's airports
- Ticket sales
- Help and advice
- Passenger safety
- The management of interchanges
- Planned and unplanned service disruption

This research can be downloaded from the *interchange matters* section of our website.

### **Who this report is for**

*Interchange matters: passenger priorities for improvement* is aimed at a very wide audience – industry professionals working for TfL, Network Rail, the train operating companies or the DfT, local highway authorities and developers and transport users themselves.

Alongside this report, we have developed a scoring system to rate interchanges from the passenger perspective on a scale of one to five stars. We will use this to start identifying where improvements are needed and to inform our ongoing dialogue with the industry to achieve them. However, we

hope that others - transport users, providers and operators - will also use this tool themselves to evaluate interchange quality.

Although we have produced this report based on the experience of travel in and around London, the principles of good passenger-centred interchange are equally applicable to interchanges elsewhere, both across the UK and in other countries. We hope it will lead to a greater focus on passenger needs and help lead to the development of more five star interchanges.

Last year we published *Improving public transport access to London's airports*. This included more detailed consideration of the specific needs of air passengers interchanging whilst travelling to or from the airport which may also be of interest and is available on our website.

Looking ahead, we will also be doing further research into what is needed from the passenger perspective at London's smaller rail stations and at bus stations.

### 3 Stations, stops and their surroundings

This chapter looks at the physical aspects of interchange stations and stops. Accessibility, layout and information, facilities, the quality of the surrounding area and streets, as well as the local travelling environment are priorities for passengers and are often the most difficult aspect of interchanges to get right.

#### 3.1 Accessibility

Focus group participants were clear that accessibility is the most important attribute of an interchange. Ease of access around the interchange is important not just to make travel easier for those with disabilities, elderly passengers, or those carrying luggage or travelling with children in pushchairs, but for all passengers.

Accessible design, particularly for the visually and mobility impaired, is well embedded in transport policy. Indeed, there is both specific prescriptive legislation and a general duty on public bodies to promote equality of access through the Equality Act 2010. It is widely recognised that accessibility improvements to the transport system benefit not only those in particular target groups, but a much wider cross-section of the travelling public. From the operators' perspective, there is also a very good business case for improving accessibility because it means that passengers can get on and off vehicles more quickly, which helps to reduce 'dwell times' at stations or stops.

Accessibility is particularly important at interchanges because these present additional complexities.

*"If any area of an interchange is difficult for any passenger to use for any reason, it can't be considered to be truly accessible." [Focus group participant]*

This was consistent with the findings of previous London TravelWatch research<sup>2</sup> which showed that passengers without any mobility impairment viewed good accessibility as a priority. Indeed, investment by operators to improve accessibility was seen by passengers as giving value for money even though they themselves might not directly benefit from it.

*"The key issue in this respect should therefore be defined as ease of access rather than accessibility" [Focus group participant]*

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<sup>2</sup> London TravelWatch (2013), *Value for money on London's transport services*



## Improving accessibility

An interchange is only truly accessible when each of its component parts are fully accessible and much progress has been made in recent years in improving accessibility. There is an ongoing programme to make stations and stops step-free, including the routes to and from them, and passengers are slowly beginning to see improvements that bring the platform level with the train floor. There has also been a big increase in the number of bus stops in London that are accessible, with changes to kerb height to complement London's fleet of low-floor buses and bus accessibility ramps, as well as stricter parking restrictions and the removal of impediments to boarding and alighting buses. Bus stop accessibility is particularly important at bus and rail interchange stations where volumes of passengers are higher. We welcome these improvements, but there is still much more that needs to be done.



**An inaccessible bus stop – the kerb height is too low for the bus ramp to properly reach the pavement, making it difficult for wheelchair users to get on or off the bus**

Some relatively simple improvements can make a great difference. For example, it is important for those with visual impairments that staircases have tactile paving at both the top and bottom yet, disappointingly, even some Olympic and Paralympic Games venue stations had not had this facility installed when London TravelWatch surveyed them in 2012.<sup>3</sup> However, the most disappointing aspect of our investigation was the lack of level and continuous footways on adjacent streets which make it difficult to get from stations to bus stops. Getting to Greenwich Station was a real problem for our disabled mystery shoppers, particularly wheelchair users, as they tried to negotiate high kerbs or get around parked cars. Some of these problems, such as clearing parking obstructions, have been resolved, but not all.

<sup>3</sup>London TravelWatch (2012), *Will everyone get to the Games: Mystery shopping the Olympic and Paralympic venue stations*



There are also more major works, such as lift installations that, whilst potentially very expensive, have benefits for all passengers. The Department for Transport's *Railways for All* accessibility strategy and the recent additions to TfL's programme to make its stations accessible are welcome. However, both Government and the industry should recognise the value all passengers place on accessibility and give more weight to this, as well as the industry benefits that accrue from a more accessible system, when preparing and evaluating business plans to justify capital works.

However, stations are not truly accessible unless their surrounding areas are also accessible and all passengers can easily interchange through them. Outside these large accessibility programmes, there are many opportunities for more minor works to improve accessibility in and around interchanges. For example, along the ramp leading from Praed Street into Paddington Station, two very high kerbs previously made the southern pavement virtually inaccessible. After several years of pressure from London TravelWatch, four dropped kerbs were installed by Network Rail, greatly improving access to this major station to the benefit of all passengers. Despite this, just around the corner on the public highway, there remain a series of kerbs that force passengers off the pavement to drag their luggage along the carriageway.



**Between Hackney Central and Hackney Downs stations, the footway is level and continuous**



**Around the corner from Paddington Station, pedestrians have to walk in the carriageway**

There are numerous examples of similar, simple interventions that should be systematically addressed in and around most of London's transport interchanges. The surrounding area should be audited and, if necessary, highway modifications undertaken. Minor works to the streets adjacent to interchanges are the responsibility of the local highway authority, which will either be the relevant council or TfL. However, it is important that the transport industry, on behalf of its passengers, works in partnership with the local highway authority to promote improvement. There is sometimes good coordination between local highway authorities and the transport industry, but this is not always the case. The station travel planning process required in new rail franchises helps to promote joint working.

*“If the station isn’t accessible, it would be helpful to know how many steps there are and how easy they are to negotiate and whether anyone is available to help you.” [Focus group participant]*

## Dealing with obstructions on station concourses

Poorly placed free-standing advertising boards can obstruct passenger sightlines and movement through stations, as well as potentially causing accidents, conflicts and collisions. Although temporary advertising boards can be useful to provide travel information in locations not already served by permanent signage, they must not obstruct the sightlines and movement, or affect the safety of passengers, especially on crowded concourses. According to Network Rail guidance, ancillary equipment such as temporary information should be placed in areas where they will not reduce capacity for movement, increase the risk of accidents, or provide concealed spaces where objects can be hidden<sup>4</sup>.

As on many London pavements where it is illegal for retailers to place free-standing advertising boards, retailers and station operators should generally not be allowed to place these on the concourse unless there is a very clear passenger benefit.



**Poorly placed advertising boards obstruct passenger movement and sightlines and can be a safety risk.**

Accessibility is not just about physical changes; it also requires good management and, where necessary, enforcement. London TravelWatch has previously highlighted<sup>5</sup> the poor management of, and enforcement against, obstructions on London’s pavements by local highway authorities with statutory duties to keep the pavements clear. Obstructions in the streets around transport interchanges are not just an inconvenience for all

<sup>4</sup> Network Rail (2011), *Guide to Station Planning and Design – Issue 1*.

<sup>5</sup> London TravelWatch (2013), *Inclusive Streets*

transport users, they can sometimes be dangerous, especially for blind and partially-sighted, mobility impaired and older people.

### 3.2 Layout and information

Participants in our focus groups identified layout as another important characteristic of an interchange, recognising that a well laid-out station and surrounding area makes interchanging much easier. An ideal layout is one that is self-explaining, such that minimal signage is needed to guide passengers through the interchange.

*“London Bridge would be rated poor, Victoria is better but the platforms are still in three sections and Waterloo would be best because there is one line of platforms” [Focus group participant]*

#### Visibility and coherent design

Many rail interchange stations in London are small, with only one or two entrances so the ticket gates are usually immediately obvious and guide passengers naturally onto the platforms. However, London’s larger interchanges, especially the major rail terminals, are far more complex and require detailed planning to provide a coherent layout for passengers. Several of London’s major rail terminals have grown in a piece-meal manner over the years. As these stations grew and consolidated neighbouring tracks and services - including connections with the London Underground - they became increasingly complex interchanges, often with totally separate operations within a ‘single’ station. This kind of legacy can be seen most notably at Paddington Station where both National Rail and London Underground services are split, posing great problems for passengers unfamiliar with the interchange.



Shepherd's Bush Tube station entrance has a simple, uncluttered layout

Some stations were eventually redeveloped to form a more comprehensive and unified station layout. For example, Euston Station had, over the years, become dispersed and connected by a complex network of passageways until its overhaul in the 1960s. Similarly, London Bridge Station is currently undergoing a process of reconfiguration and simplification.

In addition, the newly refurbished King's Cross and St Pancras Stations are now well laid out and, with a minimum of signage and passengers can easily understand how to navigate their way around and between them. From any point in or around the stations, the ticket offices and other facilities are either in full view or clearly signposted.

Although a busy and congested station, Wimbledon is a major interchange point where new services have been accommodated within the original station site alongside the original railway. Hence, passengers can identify how to change between the Underground, tram or train with relative ease as they are all accessed from a single walkway.

The difficulties passengers may have navigating around stations are too often compounded by badly sited commercial kiosks and advertisements which impede circulation and obstruct the visibility of the platforms. Kiosks and advertising hoardings can also make it more difficult to locate key information in places where it is most useful to passengers.



**The platforms at Paddington Station cannot be seen from much of the concourse due to retail kiosks**

Retail outlets in stations can be important and useful for passengers. Unfortunately, the lack of a balance between the passenger's need to easily navigate through stations and Network Rail's commercial requirements to sell retail space has resulted in a poor passenger experience at some of London's major rail terminals.

When it was redeveloped in the 1960s, Euston Station was an example of good layout. Unfortunately, this has since deteriorated as, similar to Paddington Station, views of the platforms are now obstructed by retail kiosks. Even the visibility of the exit and route to the street, which are key for those unfamiliar with the station as well as for safety and security reasons, are hidden and lack adequate signage.

London TravelWatch welcomes the work undertaken by Network Rail at Waterloo Station to relocate retail kiosks away from the passenger concourse. Network Rail should regularly review the scale of retailing on its concourses with a view to improving the layout of its stations. Whilst we



recognise the importance of commercial income, it is nevertheless important that, London Underground ensures that any reconfiguration of its property, following the removal of ticket offices, prioritises passenger and operational interests over commercial ones where there is a conflict.

## Finding the station

Where possible, interchange stations should include a 'totem' sign at the main street entrances making the station entrance more visible and clearly identifying all of the services available.

Bus and coach stations and stops should be located as close as possible to rail station entrances. When this is not possible, the walking route to the rail station should be well-indicated, well-lit, step-free and free from obstructions. This point is covered in more detail in the next chapter.



**Liverpool Street Station - a major London interchange...**



**...the entrance to which is invisible from just around the corner**

As well as providing level access into stations, it is important that, particularly at busy interchanges, it is possible to get directly into the station from different directions. This is not only convenient for passengers who can follow their 'desire line', it also helps to ease congestion. We welcome the new exits that have been provided at West Croydon Station (giving direct access to the tram stop and bus station) and East Croydon Station (giving direct access to many office blocks), but continue to argue for new exits to be opened or reopened at stations such as Euston and Lewisham.



**'Totem' signage outside station entrances helps to make them more visible and show the services available**

## **Ticket gates and validators**

A particularly important aspect of the layout of an interchange, raised by our research participants, is the location of the ticket gates or gateline. These have the potential to restrict movement and create bottlenecks, especially where passengers cannot easily identify before they reach them which gates are in use, which do or do not accept paper tickets or smart cards, and which gates are easier for passengers with luggage. The new signage at London Bridge National Rail station is very clear.

Ticket gatelines may also act as a barrier between the facilities and information that is available on either side of the gateline. Signage should be provided indicating the facilities available on either side of the gateline.

*"It would be good to know what facilities are on the concourse and the platforms so you know what is on either side of the barrier." [Focus group participant]*

We know from previous research that interchanging passengers using Pay As You Go (PAYG) Oyster cards or Contactless bank cards are often unclear as to whether or not they need to 'touch in' before continuing their journey on another vehicle. Where it is necessary for passengers to use the pink Oyster validator, it is important that this is located and advertised in such a way that it is highly visible and also that these readers clearly explain the circumstances in which they should be used.

Rail passengers travelling into London from outside TfL's travelcard zone who want to travel onwards using an Oyster or Contactless card also face problems when they interchange. They may have to exit the station and re-enter in order to validate their card, which rather undermines the

convenience which should be associated with smart ticketing. Although the best way to do this will vary between stations, it is important that this transition between Oyster enabled travel and National Rail tickets is made as simple and convenient as possible.

### Information and signage within the station

Unsurprisingly, quality information is also a high priority for passengers. Good signage is essential to help passengers navigate the more complex interchanges. TfL generally do this well within and around the stations and stops they operate. However, there is still room for improvement within many London Underground stations where passengers unfamiliar with the station can go the wrong way because directional signs are not clearly visible at every point where there is a choice of which direction to take.



**At London Bridge clearly marked ticket gates show where passengers should go**

Network Rail, with much larger and more complicated stations, does this less well, in part because it has stricter internal controls over what signage it uses. Whilst we agree that there should be an industry standard for signage, and welcome Network Rail's consistency of approach, major London rail terminals, need signage that is specific to both the location and the station. The font size used on signs at these major terminal stations needs to be much larger so that they can be read from a distance by passengers moving at a walking pace. In particular, the London Underground roundel sign should be shown much more clearly because it is so well known. It would be of great benefit to passengers if this was displayed as a stand alone sign above the entrance to the Underground station if this is within the National Rail station concourse or adjacent to the exit closest to it, as has recently been done at Victoria National Rail Station.



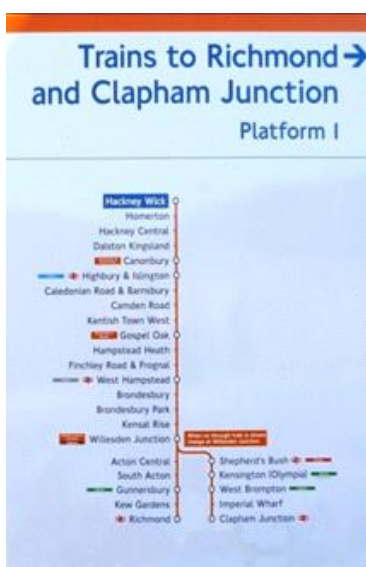
At London Bridge Station (prior to the redevelopment begun in December 2014) signage to the through platforms simply indicated 'to Platforms 1-6', which is vague and unhelpful to passengers unfamiliar with the station layout who will not know which platform they need until they have read the departure board. At major National Rail stations such as Paddington, Victoria and London Bridge, where trains depart from different sections of the station depending on their destination, it would be much easier for passengers if the signage identified 'trains towards . . . ' as well as the logos of the train companies whose services run from these platforms.

Signage at St Pancras Station identifies the platforms served by different operators but it would be even more useful for interchanging passengers if it also indicated the major destinations on every sign (e.g. Southeastern trains to Stratford and Kent, or Thameslink trains to Bedford, Luton Parkway, East Croydon, Gatwick Airport and Brighton).

New departure boards outside London Bridge National Rail Station help passengers to identify which platform they need before they enter the main station concourse, reducing the likelihood that they will mistakenly go to the wrong part of the station and helping to reduce congestion on the concourse. However, they would be even more helpful for passengers if the next departure information for key destinations was displayed in a much larger font which could be seen by passengers arriving by bus, taxi, cycle or on foot. This is what happens at Flinders Street Station in Melbourne which has, for many decades, displayed clocks on its main facade showing when the next trains depart on each line.



The signage outside Flinders Street Station in Melbourne is easy for all to see



Line of route maps, such as that shown in the picture, are particularly helpful for passengers unfamiliar with the location as they not only help to guide passengers to the right platform but also clearly indicate the interchange stations along the route.

However, all too often it seems that travel signage is designed on the basis of what seems right from the industry perspective (by someone very familiar with the location and how different services operate in and around it) rather than from the perspective of a passenger having to interchange who may never have been there previously.

If *London's Rail and Tube* maps are clearly displayed not just at the entry point to the station but on every platform then passengers can more easily plan, or check, their onward travel arrangements whilst they wait for the train or Tube.

At bus stops, realtime information about when the next bus will depart is particularly valuable to interchanging passengers as it reassures them that they are in the right place and lets them know how long they will have to wait. Passengers also need to know if their bus will be late, particularly if they could take another bus instead. This information should be provided at all bus stations and prioritised for stops around major transport interchanges.



**Live Countdown signs reassure passengers about the next bus arrival**

## Information quality and placement

The quality and location of information is very important. TfL provides quality information at the locations one would probably expect to see it. For example, passenger information is located near the entrance to Victoria Coach Station.



**Passenger information near the entrance to Victoria Coach Station**

Information from the train operators and Network Rail is sometimes of a lower quality and poorly located (or provided in only a single location in large and complex stations). Some of the train companies use mapping designed for motorists, rather than pedestrians who need to see a large

scale map of surrounding streets. Furthermore, important information for passengers such as mapping can be swamped by the surrounding advertising material.

All too often, engineering works posters are installed in random locations as space becomes available when advertising posters are changed. As part of the suite of information passengers need to make their journey easier, engineering works posters should be visible and placed in a consistent location where passengers would expect to find it.



**This information point at Maryland is neither providing locally relevant or helpful travel information**

*“The aspiration should be to have the type and quality of information that was available during the Olympics for all forms of public transport that is available from all stations.” [Focus group participant]*

## Public address systems and high-level plasma screens

All public address systems should be regularly maintained to ensure that announcements are clearly audible, but this is particularly important at interchange stations where passengers may be unfamiliar with the location and unsure exactly where they need to board the train, bus, tram or Tube for the next leg of their journey. Announcements targeting all passengers within the station should be audible in all areas throughout the interchange station, however focused enough so as not to unduly disturb nearby residents. Conversely, announcements pertaining to a particular platform(s) should be directed at the relevant area of the station. During times of disruption, the focus of announcements should be on the disruption to make it as easy as possible for passengers to hear the information relating to their journey. Therefore, all other regular automated station announcements irrelevant to the disruption incident should be overridden.

Some station concourses are equipped with high-level plasma screens used for advertising. Station operators and advertisers should recognise that travel information has a greater priority for passengers during service disruptions, and should arrange for high-level plasma screens to be used to provide key travel information.

### 3.3 Facilities

Time spent at an interchange station is essentially involuntary time as passengers would sooner be continuing with their journey than waiting for their train or bus. It is important that there are sufficient facilities available at an interchange station to allow them to wait in relative comfort.

Although passengers will recognise that the range of facilities available at an interchange will depend on its size and location, there are certain facilities that should always be provided - shelter from the weather, toilets, seating, litter bins, cycle parking overlooked by passive surveillance and, if the station is unstaffed, a CCTV monitored help point. Larger interchange stations should always be staffed when services are running and have WiFi, cash points, sell refreshments and have some retail outlets. At major London terminal stations, passengers will expect to have all of these facilities together with a wider range of shops, a choice of cafes and restaurants, currency exchange, left luggage facilities, and cycle hire nearby. Many large stations such as St Pancras have become destinations in their own right because of the range of facilities they offer. The following section looks at those facilities that passengers value most at London's interchange stations.

## Toilets

The provision of toilets is the single most valued facility expected by passengers. This is particularly important at interchanges due to the extended times passengers could be spending there.

Toilets should be made available to all users of an interchange. The quality of the toilet facilities at Shepherd's Bush Station are exemplary and available for all the users of the interchange, including those outside the ticket gates.



**The public toilets at Shepherd's Bush Station are available to all users of the interchange**

There has been some reluctance on the part of transport authorities to provide toilet facilities; indeed some have been closed due to high maintenance and repair costs. At the same time, many local authority-



provided public toilets have also been closed. However, some successful schemes, such as the Mayor's *Open London* and individual schemes at the borough level, have encouraged local businesses to make their toilet facilities available to the public. Despite this, there are no guarantees that toilet facilities will be available, signposted, or accessible when and where a passenger may need them.

Not only should toilet facilities be available to all users of interchange stations, but information about them should also be available. A report from the London Assembly's *Health and Public Services Committee* found that information about the location, facilities and cost of public toilets in the capital was incomplete.<sup>6</sup> In order to improve information about toilet facilities for passengers, TfL has recently made the data of its public toilets facilities publicly available for app developers and members of the public to amalgamate and disseminate. A map of toilets on the London Underground network is one example of something which has been produced with the data.

Research participants told us that, whilst they understood the rationale for charging for the use of toilet facilities at an interchange, they strongly object to having paid, often considerable amounts of money, for a ticket and then being charged further or being prevented from using the toilets because they didn't have the correct change. The provision of free toilet facilities for ticket holders was identified by focus group participants as a factor that would enhance perceptions of value for money for passengers.



**Pay toilets at Victoria Station with change machines located immediately adjacent**

*"Toilets are the most important thing. You need to know whether they are available, what condition they are in and whether they are free or not." [Focus group participant]*

As well as being available free to passengers, toilets should be regularly cleaned and maintained. Toilet cubicles should all have hooks or shelf space so that passengers have somewhere to put coats, small items or handbags and there should be sufficient room for people to get inside and still close the door easily. At least one toilet cubicle should be fully accessible for wheelchair users. Facilities for changing a baby should be available for use by both men and women. At London's larger interchange stations, where many passengers may be travelling with luggage, all toilet

<sup>6</sup> London Assembly (2011). *Public toilets in London: Update report*

cubicles should have sufficient space for luggage, as they do at airports. Where toilets are not free, change machines should be located immediately adjacent, fully operational and kept topped up.

## Bicycle parking and provision

Cycling is on the rise in London, aided by high profile investment in increased and improved cycling infrastructure across the capital. The successful London Cycle Hire scheme and proposals for a network of 'Quietways' and segregated 'Cycle Superhighways' aim to increase the number of people who use the bicycle as a means of transport for commuting and leisure. To complement this, TfL also aim to provide cyclists with 80,000 additional parking spaces in a variety of places including stations by 2016.<sup>7</sup> There are other innovations such as the Finsbury Park Cycle Hub, a staffed cycle parking facility at a busy interchange, and South West Trains' folding cycle hire initiative at Waterloo station.



**Bike stands inside Paddington Station increase the range of possibilities for onward travel**

Bicycle parking facilities should be made widely available close to public transport stations and stops in order to further encourage cycling as a component of interchange. Indeed, simply installing bicycle parking beside a bus stop, for example, creates an interchange. Bicycle parking facilities should be well-placed within or around London Underground, National Rail, bus and coach stations in order to be visible and promoted, easily accessible, and supervised by the 'passive surveillance' of passers-by, rather than being tucked away out of sight.

Since some cyclists may be unaware of an individual train company's policy regarding taking bicycles onto trains, this information should also be clearly displayed at transport interchanges as well as beside cycle parks.

## Cycle hire

Cycle Hire docking stations have been located near or adjacent to London Underground or National Rail stations to integrate cycling into the public transport network. We welcome the opportunity to interchange to cycle hire facilities from London Underground and National Rail stations. New

<sup>7</sup> Transport for London (2013), *London's Road Modernisation Plan: The biggest road investment programme for a generation*. p.11

technologies, such as the recently launched Santander Cycles App, will also make it easier to use the service and may attract new users.

The cycle hire facility, such as at Waterloo Station, demonstrates the demand for cycling to undertake the journey to and from the station, however we recognise the logistical complexity of maintaining an even distribution of bicycles throughout the network, especially at peak hours because of the primarily one-directional usage of cycles.

### **Smoking areas**

Many passengers will welcome the smoking ban at rail stations, however this means that smoking can be displaced and concentrated in a small area around the station entrance. If this is the case it may be appropriate to allocate an area away from entrances that does not inconvenience passengers generally. This space should be clearly signed and operators should discourage smoking in other areas immediately adjacent to the station.

### **Facilities at bus and coach stations**

Bus and coach stations often form an integral part of a much larger multi-modal interchange and, in some places, the bus station is the heart of the interchange. Much has been done to improve multi-modal interchanges involving buses in recent years, yet customer satisfaction surveys consistently show lower scores for these bus interchanges than for other elements of the surveys. Scores are particularly low for the provision of information and the cleanliness and condition of toilet facilities.

Like rail stations, bus and coach stations should have all the facilities that passengers expect and improvements should be made in these areas to give bus passengers a better service. As a first step towards this, we recommend that TfL develops a service standard setting out what passengers might expect to find at different types of bus stations.

## **3.4 The quality of the surrounding area and streets**

With millions of passengers a year entering and leaving London's interchanges, it is important that the quality of the surrounding area and streets is properly considered by both the transport operators and the local authority. Although the boundary of an interchange may be difficult to define, the routes to nearby bus stops, for example, should definitely be regarded as part of the interchange. Similarly, the routes to key local amenities such as the town centre and schools, health services, or other stations within the vicinity, should all be managed to an equally high standard, with maps and clear signage along the way.





**At Shepherd's Bush Station, area-wide improvements have included raised junctions to improve the pedestrian environment.**



**In contrast, the streets around Paddington Station need a makeover, including the removal of clutter**

Our focus group participants agreed that the environs of the interchange should be pedestrian friendly. This means a continuous, clear, wide, level and clean footway, and road crossings that align with pedestrian desire lines. These issues are important for all pedestrians, but particularly for disabled and elderly people, as well as those wheeling luggage or travelling with young children in prams or buggies.

Whilst we recognise that much of the above lies beyond the direct control of interchange managers, it is nevertheless important that the transport industry works in partnership with other relevant agencies, particularly the highway authority responsible for managing the surrounding streets, to promote improvement for passengers as they arrive at and depart from interchange stations and stops.

### 3.5 The local travelling environment

The quality of the local travelling environment is important for passengers, who do not like to see litter on track-beds, pavements, platforms and embankments, or graffiti on buildings and fences. Following our work with the rail industry over a number of years, accumulations of litter on the track-beds between platforms is much reduced. A high level of cleanliness should be maintained.



**A 'cared-for' environment improves the passenger experience**

Whilst litter and cleanliness are of less overall importance for passengers than service reliability and journey time, our focus group participants told us that they want an interchange to be a place where they would feel comfortable to spend time.

*“I want to know whether it’s a nice place to wait because I often travel with my kids and I would prefer them to be in a nice environment.” [Focus group participant]*

Poor local environmental quality promotes further anti-social behaviour; it is a problem akin to the broken window theory, which suggests that areas perceived as not properly maintained in turn encourage further anti-social behaviour and vandalism because it seems nobody cares.

*“The reason why graffiti is important is because it affects your sense of security when you are at the station, especially if there are subways you need to use.” [Focus group participant]*

Not only is a poor environment unsightly, it can have operational consequences for the industry: litter can cause fires, become caught up in train pantographs, or obstruct drainage leading to flooding and structural damage. This is particularly important at interchange stations because of the potential for knock-on effects to multiple services and the local travelling environment should be considered more seriously by the transport industry. The improvement in local environmental quality at transport interchanges over recent years has been recognised and welcomed. However, this issue needs constant monitoring and management. London TravelWatch will continue to lobby for future franchises, concessions and licence agreements to include joint incentives to require train operators and Network Rail to properly manage the station and surrounding trackside environments.

### 3.6 Recommendations for stations, stops and their surroundings

Transport operators and other relevant agencies should:

- Improve accessibility:
  - the on-going programme to make London stations, bus stops and facilities accessible to all passengers should be accelerated
  - tactile paving should be installed to help guide blind and partially-sighted people, especially on platform edges and at the top and bottom of staircases
  - obstructions to passenger movement should be minimised, including on streets adjacent to interchange stations and during major station redevelopments
- Improve signage and wayfinding:
  - station layouts should make interchanging easier by being coherent without the need for excessive signage, especially at major rail terminals
  - station entrances and facilities should be either clearly visible or well signposted on either side of the ticket gates
  - signage should clearly indicate what facilities are available at an interchange station, and whether it is necessary to go through ticket gates to reach them

- signage beside the station entrance should clearly identify which platforms are used by which operators and the key destinations served
- signage schemes should be of an industry standard, in a large font, and bespoke to the location
- interchange between rail and bus services should be made as easy as possible for passengers by ensuring that bus stations and stops are as close as possible to rail stations with clear signage which also indicates the routes and main destinations served from each stop
- Improve passenger information:
  - passenger information, including about engineering works, should be available in a consistent location where passengers would expect to find it
  - bus-arrivals 'Countdown' information screens should be provided at more London bus stops and stations, particularly those by major interchange points
  - general public address system announcements should be clearly audible throughout the station, with specific announcements targeted to the relevant part of the station
  - normal public announcements and advertisements on high-level plasma screens should be overridden during times of disruption so they can be used to provide travel information for passengers
  - passenger needs should be prioritised over commercial ones by ensuring that retail kiosks and freestanding advertising boards do not obstruct the station concourse or views of platforms, exits and other facilities.
- Depending on the size of the interchange, appropriate facilities should be provided to passengers:
  - shelter from the weather and seating should be provided at all interchanges
  - waiting rooms, toilets, cycle parking and some form of refreshment retailing should be provided at all but the smallest interchanges
  - refreshment and retail outlets, cash points, WiFi and designated smoking areas should ideally be provided
  - toilets should be accessible and available to all users of an interchange, including those outside the ticket gates, with cubicles large enough to accommodate luggage at larger rail terminals
  - free toilets should be provided as often as possible, particularly to ticket holders. Where toilets are not free, change machines should be located immediately adjacent, kept fully operational and loaded with change
  - TfL should set out clear service standards so passengers know what to expect at bus stations.
- Improve the travelling environment:
  - operators and service providers should work in partnership with relevant stakeholders to provide continuous, clear, wide, level and

- clean footways, as well as road crossings that align with pedestrian desire lines to improve how passengers arrive at and depart from interchanges
- there should be a continual focus on local environmental quality, including by clearing litter from track-beds and embankments and graffiti from buildings and fences.

## 4 Onward travel

In this chapter we consider what needs to be in place to make the transfer to the next leg of a journey as seamless as possible, starting with the onward journey information provided at and around the station. We then go on to reflect on the different interchange possibilities and how these need to be better promoted for the benefit of those unfamiliar with the location.

### 4.1 Onward journey information



**High quality information eases onward journey planning**

Information to help passengers with their onward journey is critical to a successful interchange, as participants in our focus groups confirmed. They told us that the top priorities are for information to be of a high quality, quantity, and visibility, but that quality is more important than quantity. The information should be easy to find, clearly set out and comprehensive, with a special focus on the needs of passengers making connections and continuing their journey.

However, even where high quality information is provided, passengers still expect to be able to talk to staff – either directly at larger stations or, at smaller stations, indirectly through a remotely monitored customer ‘Help Point’.

The first requirement is for clear guidance to help passengers navigate around the interchange with clear indications about where to make a connection or which exit to use when there is more than one. Timetables, route maps and audible public address systems are essential and, when services are disrupted, information about this should be clearly presented. It is much easier to identify and understand information if it is always given in a consistent way and the transport industry should work towards a single standard for information at all of London’s interchanges.

*“It would be helpful if they could ensure a uniform presentation of information so no matter where you are you always know what you are looking for.” [Focus group participant]*

Research participants told us that they had seen an improvement over the last few years in the provision of information of all types across the transport industry. TfL, in particular, have been very proactive in providing a good suite of information for passengers.



*“London Underground tend to be a bit ahead of the train companies in terms of providing information about their services. They usually have good updates and real-time running information so that should be used as the benchmark.” [Focus group participant]*

London Underground stations are generally a model for good information. They almost all have the arrival and departure information passengers want: real time departure screens; line status information for the Overground and Underground network; signage and directions towards bus stops and local amenities; pedestrian, bus, London Underground and National Rail maps; first and last train information; and white boards for ad-hoc local information. Features such as these should be available at all interchanges and cover all modes. However, white boards need to be used with care as some passengers are sceptical of the relevance of the information hand-written on them. It could be that the informal use of these white boards at London Underground stations to record a thought or poem for the day might reinforce this scepticism, so care needs to be taken.

The line status boards (rainbow boards), which describe how an Underground line is performing, have been upgraded to include London Overground services. However, with the increasing complexity and scale of routes, they can no longer be described with one label and we have previously recommended individual branding for the different lines to define a local identity<sup>8</sup>. This would help passengers discern whether or not disruption affects their journey and will also simplify journey planning. We understand this will be happening. We also want to see other National Rail services appear on TfL’s line status boards as this would be very useful for passengers interchanging to National Rail services.

TfL’s ‘Continuing your journey’ local pedestrian and bus mapping system is now commonplace inside all London Underground stations and has been adopted by most train companies. We understand that this system will be rolled out across London, including at Network Rail managed stations.



**Continuing your journey map system inside station**



**Legible London mapping**

<sup>8</sup> London TravelWatch (2014), *Value for Money on London Overground: what consumers think*

The Legible London pedestrian wayfinding map system is another excellent initiative which is becoming the on street industry standard. Greater benefit will be derived from having a single scheme across London. To facilitate onward journey planning, we would like to see clear maps located both inside and outside interchange stations.

## Finding the bus

It is also important that signage for passengers making onward journeys by bus shows directional information to avoid confusion. This may be via mapping, directional signs or 'buses towards...' signage. For example, rather than simply being designated 'Exit to bus stops', signage should indicate particular directions of travel away from the interchange.



**In this sign at Paddington Station, buses are treated like taxis with no indication of key destinations**

The 'buses towards...' signage at London Underground stations and many National Rail stations is useful in both guiding passengers, but also in marketing the fact that buses towards various destinations are available. This system should be reinforced at decision points in the surrounding streets as part of the Legible London wayfinding map scheme. As many interchanging passengers unfamiliar with London will tend to use the Underground for onward travel because it is easier to identify which services they need to use, giving clearer information on bus routes will help to give passengers a choice about how they travel to their next destination.





**'Buses towards...' signage at Forest Gate Station is more specific and useful**

Onward travel signage for buses that does not give any associated directional information treats buses as if they were taxis which can be taken to any destinations of choice. Passengers unfamiliar with the area who want to catch a bus will naturally follow the signs marked 'bus'. However, if they arrive at London Bridge National Rail station wanting to visit the Tower of London and exit via the gatelines beside Tooley Street and follow the bus sign immediately opposite, they will have to go up two flights of stairs and cross the street to the bus station outside the main station entrance, only to find that they need to go along Dukes Hill, cross the road and turn right – to find themselves at a bus stop just across the road from where they started. A simple sign indicating 'buses towards Tower Bridge and the Tower of London' (two of the capital's major tourist attractions) would save the passenger about 10 minutes.

However, ease of interchange with the bus is often dependent on the local circumstances. For example, at Victoria Station, where the majority of bus services operate from the front of the station, easy interchange with bus services leads to more passengers interchanging from trains to buses. Conversely, interchange with buses at Waterloo Station is more problematic, with stops dispersed on streets around the station, meaning that it is not so easy for passengers who do not know the interchange to make connections with bus services.

Whilst the Stratford bus station is adjacent to the rail station entrance, some routes are unable to stop at the bus station due to the one-way configuration of the local road network. Instead, passengers must walk through the local shopping centre to reach some of the westbound stops. Similarly at Euston Station, passengers must cross the busy Euston Road for westbound bus services and, although the Orpington bus station is well

located adjacent to the rail station's entrance and the surrounding road system is quite simple, not all bus services use the bus station.

Where possible, improvements should be made to facilitate interchange with and between bus services. However, since local circumstances may affect the ease of interchange, it is very important that the location of stops and direction of travel of buses leaving from these stops is clearly indicated to passengers.

### Taking a taxi

Many interchanges will be served by taxis and probably increasingly so by private hire vehicles that can easily be contacted by mobile phone apps. It is important that, where possible, a convenient location is assigned for a taxi rank, and that taxis and private hire vehicles can safely pick-up and drop-off. These facilities should be well signed for passengers.

## 4.2 Dispersed but walkable interchanges

So far this report has considered issues for passengers using interchanges where services are clustered around one point. However, across London, there are many dispersed interchanges where a connection can be made easily by walking between two nearby but separate stations.



**The footway between Bow Road Tube station and Bow Church DLR station along Bow Road is of a high quality, with a clear and continuous footway**

Walkable interchanges are beneficial to both passengers and the transport network. They provide additional travel options to passengers and, in some cases, the opportunity to avoid travelling unnecessarily through Zones 1 and 2, meaning a potential for a shorter and/or less costly journey. Walkable interchanges can also enable passengers to make best use of the network during times of disruption.

They are also strategically important as they offer the potential to relieve congestion on the transport network, especially when passengers are able to avoid travelling through Zones 1 and 2.

Passengers familiar with the area will already be taking advantage of these interchange opportunities. However, it would make things so much easier for passengers planning their travel if more information was shown about walkable interchange options, particularly when the stations are less than a 10 minute walk apart. A designated route should be established and clearly shown on maps within and between both stations, where necessary, such

as at a half-way point along the walking route. Routes need to be clearly signed, well-lit, step-free, safe and walkable within a reasonable time.

As previously mentioned, it is important that the footway between the two stations is of a high standard for passengers with disabilities, travelling with luggage or young children. Kerbs must be dropped or carriageways raised to the level of the footway and, ideally, the footway would be clear of litter and obstructions. TfL could develop the quality of walkable interchange through their 'Better walking routes' initiative to improve key walking routes linking public transport stations.

### **Out-of-station interchanges**

Some walkable interchanges simply provide a useful interchange for passengers but others are recognised in TfL's fare structure and called Out-of-Station Interchanges (OSIs). An OSI is a temporary or permanent connection permitted within the TfL fare structure, giving passengers an allotted time to make an interchange between two stations on a single fare. For example, a passenger using an Oyster PAYG card can touch out at Bow Road Underground Station and touch in (within 15 minutes) at Bow Church DLR Station without incurring an extra fare as the trip counts as a single journey.

TfL has been reluctant to publish information about OSIs due to their complexity, initially due to the ever-changing nature of the list of OSIs and, more recently, because OSIs are used within its Journey Planner travel advice where appropriate and TfL feels this to be adequate promotion.

Information about OSIs should be more widely promoted since not everyone uses TfL's Journey Planner and many passengers will be unaware of the opportunity OSIs provide.

### **Better publicising walkable interchanges**

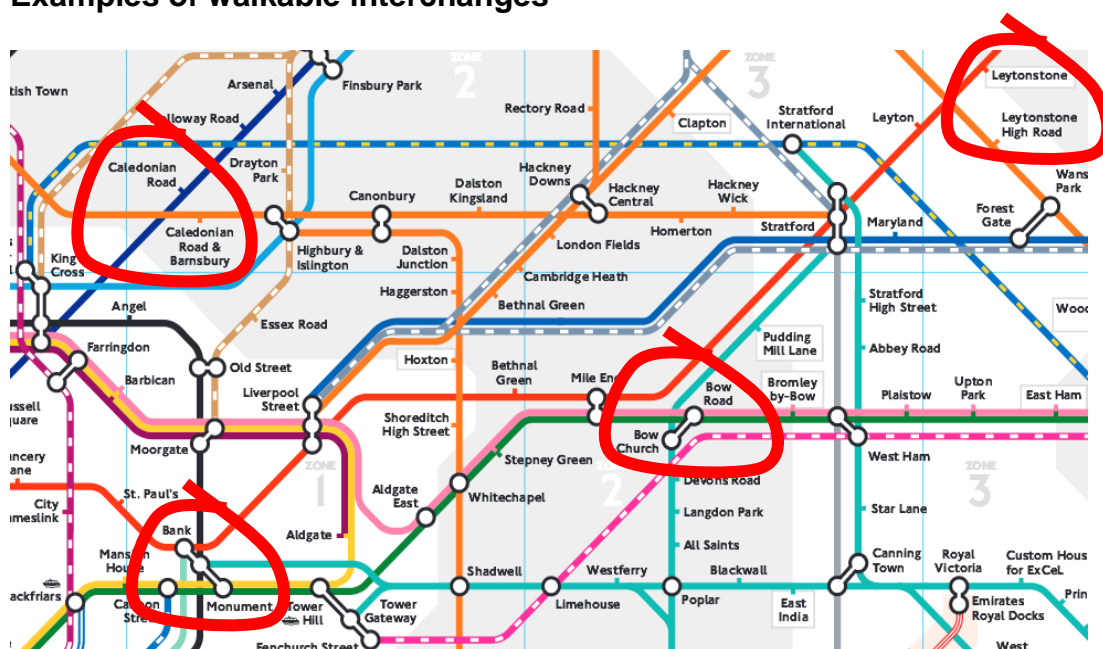
Broader awareness of these interchange opportunities generally would be a great benefit to passengers, yet only a small number of OSIs, such as the Bow Road – Bow Church example above, are indicated on the widely available and regularly updated *London's Rail and Tube services* map. Other examples include Tower Gateway – Tower Hill – Fenchurch Street; White City – Wood Lane; and Catford – Catford Bridge. The map is inconsistent and not as informative as it could be for passengers, especially for those unfamiliar with the part of London through which they are travelling. TfL and the rail industry should better promote all OSIs and other walkable interchanges.

*London's Rail and Tube services* map should not only indicate all permanent OSIs and other walkable interchanges; it should more clearly differentiate between those which necessitate walking along the street to reach the next station and those where the change can be made without going outside and onto the street. For example, the interchange symbols for

stations such as Shepherd's Bush, Brixton, Hammersmith and West Hampstead do not indicate that passengers will need to walk outside of station confines to make the interchange. Conversely, the interchange map symbols for stations such as Paddington, Bank – Monument and Farringdon do not make it clear that passengers can complete the interchange without walking outside. These different types of interchange should be better differentiated on *London's Rail and Tube services* map with a key provided to the symbols and connecting links shown so it is clear to passengers what they can expect

The symbols should also identify whether the connection is a permitted OSI recognised within the TfL fare system, or is just a convenient walkable interchange that requires passengers to pay an additional fare.

### Examples of walkable interchanges



Map source: *London's Tube and Rail services* map May 2015

There are four walkable interchanges circled in the map above. Three of them - Leytonstone–Leytonstone High Road, Bow Road – Bow Church and Bank – Monument are all OSIs recognised within TfL's fare structure. However, there is no indication on the map that Leytonstone – Leytonstone High Road is an OSI.

Bow Road – Bow Church and Bank – Monument are identified as interchanges, however they are different types of OSIs; Bow Road – Bow Church is an external OSI (for which a passenger has to walk outside between stations) while Bank – Monument is an internal OSI (for which passengers remain underground for the interchange). Interestingly the same symbol is used at Farringdon as at Bow Road - Bow Church interchange, yet Farringdon is a very easy interchange between the Underground and National Rail services because the lines are immediately adjacent to each other.



Caledonian Road - Caledonian Road & Barnsbury is not recognised as an OSI within TfL's fare structure, meaning that passengers cannot make the interchange on a single fare. However, this walkable interchange provides passengers with a good connection between Piccadilly Line and London Overground services and it would be helpful to have this identified as such.

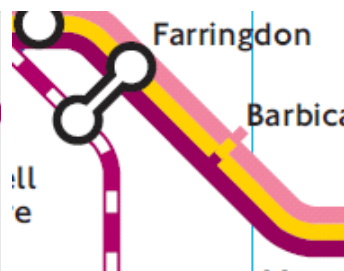
The following three interchanges are represented in a similar way on London's Rail and Tube services map. In reality Farringdon station is a simple internal interchange whereas the others entail a short walk between two or three separate stations.



The two Brixton stations are a short walk apart.



There are three separate stations at West Hampstead, all a short walk apart.



Interchanging at Farringdon can be as simple as crossing the platform.

London TravelWatch has surveyed a range of other walkable interchanges and full details of these are described in the *interchange matters* section of our website.

### Euston to King's Cross and St Pancras Stations – an important walkable interchange

Euston, King's Cross and St Pancras Stations are three of London's major terminal rail stations. Large numbers of people interchange between these stations, including passengers travelling through London on long-distance trains from Scotland and the North of England who are changing onto trains bound for Paris, Brussels and other parts of Europe.

Many of these passengers will be unfamiliar with the area and, whilst it is easy to see how to

make the connection between Kings Cross and St Pancras Stations via a well signed plaza, it appears to be much more difficult to get from either of these stations to Euston. Yet Euston is close by and, for many passengers it will be possible to make the connection on foot. However, visitors to London are more likely to use the Underground not realising that this is



It is good to see the initiative from local businesses to promote the walkable interchange between Euston and St Pancras Stations



unnecessary. The two stations are only one Underground stop apart and the section connecting the two stations is one of the busiest on the network, so the experience is not necessarily a comfortable one.

Passengers could take a taxi to travel between the stations. Or they are directed to walk along Euston Road, but this route is along a very busy road with numerous crossings and other barriers.

Since its redevelopment, St Pancras Station's centre of gravity has moved north and, consequently, for many years London TravelWatch has been advocating for a better pedestrian route between it and Euston Station along Brill Place and Phoenix Road. This alternative route was embraced by Camden Council who, with support from TfL, have upgraded the route between the two stations to ensure a continuous, level footway with improved lighting and wayfinding maps. The new Francis Crick Institute building, scheduled for completion in 2015, will allow further enhancement of the route.

The Brill Place and Phoenix Road route is an important walkable interchange whose benefits should be promoted to passengers making local, national and international journeys. National and international passengers travelling to or between Euston, King's Cross and St Pancras stations should particularly be targeted since they are likely to be unaware of the route options. The walkable interchange should also be promoted to reduce pressure on the Tube.

The route was opened up during the Olympic and Paralympic Games and the train companies at both Euston, King's Cross and St Pancras Stations are generally supportive of it. However, further improvements could be introduced with works to the eastern side of Euston Station, including the opening of a side entrance to Euston Station by Network Rail. We will continue to push for the improvement of promotion of the Brill Place and Phoenix Road route.

#### 4.3 Onward travel to and from London's airports

There are five major airports located in and around London, all of which are accessible by public transport. The interchange stations that link London's airports to its public transport system provide both a challenge and an opportunity for the transport industry; there is a real opportunity to showcase London public transport as the best way of getting to and from the airport.

Passengers travelling to and from the airport are less likely to be familiar with the interchange stations they need to use and, indeed, may never have used them before. And so the case for accessibility, a self-explaining layout, good signage and information, staff presence to help, advise and reassure, and good facilities is even greater for key interchanges on the way to London's airports. Investment should be prioritised to improve the passenger experience travelling to and from London's airports.

All airport rail stations are fully accessible from street to platform, which helps not only the mobility impaired, but those travelling with luggage or children. However, the presence of steps and excessive gaps between the edge of the platform and the train (at stations from which passengers can make a direct connection to the airport) are a major deterrent to travellers using public transport. Particularly bad examples of this include East Croydon, Clapham Junction, Seven Sisters, and Stratford stations.



**Excessive gaps between the train and platform are particularly difficult for passengers carrying luggage**

Interchange stations giving direct access to airports should also be fully accessible from street to train. Clear and consistent information is particularly important and time-critical for passengers travelling to and from airports as there is often limited time to correct any mistakes and they seek regular reassurance that they are in the right place at the right time. Providing basic flight departure information at key public transport interchanges connecting directly to London's airports would provide reassurance to airport passengers using public transport and help them to make better decisions. The need for quality information becomes even more important when there is disruption to surface transport services.

London TravelWatch's research on improving public transport access to London's airports<sup>9</sup> notes that airport passengers (and other infrequent public transport users) need a higher level of reassurance than regular users of interchanges. The presence of staff helps to reduce this lack of familiarity and, also, where necessary, staff can assist with luggage and boarding, and helping travellers alight from trains or buses.

The visible presence of staff also gives passengers reassurance about their personal safety. This is especially true for women and for those making journeys during hours of darkness, which may well affect airport passengers for whom many journeys involve late night and early morning travel. Furthermore, airport passengers are more likely to be carrying luggage, money and other valuables making them more vulnerable to crimes such as robbery.

<sup>9</sup> London TravelWatch (2014), *Improving public transport access to London's airports*

As seen in previous sections, all passengers consider that toilets are the most important facility that operators should provide and that these should be free of charge. They also expect reasonable levels of seating, shelter, waiting rooms, refreshments and shops at key interchanges. Passengers travelling to or from airports as part of a much longer overall journey will particularly appreciate the availability and accessibility of such facilities.

#### 4.4 Recommendations for onward travel from interchanges

Transport operators and other relevant agencies should:

- Work together to improve passenger information at interchanges:
  - information should be provided for all services in and around the interchange that is easy to find and not overwhelmed by advertising, clearly set out and comprehensive, with a special focus on the needs of passengers making connections and continuing their journey. This includes:
    - real-time departure and arrival screens
    - line status information
    - signage and directions towards bus stops and local amenities
    - pedestrian, bus, London Underground and National Rail maps
    - first and last train information
    - locations for engineering posters
  - a single standard for onward travel information at interchanges should be developed
- Promote opportunities that exist for passengers to interchange between lines via a short walk:
  - walking routes between stations should be improved with wayfinding, lighting and highways improvements
  - interchange opportunities should be more clearly identified on maps, online and locally
  - station to station interchanges which are recognised in the fare system should be publicised further.
- The particular needs of passengers travelling to and from London's airports should be taken into account at key interchanges on routes to or from the airport.

## 5 The staffing and management of interchanges

If passengers are to get the most out of the public transport system then the management and coordination of London's interchanges has to be improved.

This chapter starts by considering the crucial role that staff play at interchange stations, what they should be doing and how they should behave. It then looks at the importance of integrated management of interchange stations. It demonstrates the need for consistent and seamless coordination between station managers, service operators, local authorities and local service providers to give the best possible service to passengers in and around interchange stations.

### 5.1 The role of staff at interchanges

In the eyes of passengers, staff perform three main functions at transport interchanges: they sell tickets; offer help and advice; and make people feel more reassured about their personal security.

*“The emphasis . . . should be on the helpfulness rather than the availability of staff because it's variable. London Underground staff tend to be more clued up and have a good attitude. Some staff are anoraks with specialist knowledge, but that's what you want as a passenger.” [Focus group participant]*

Inevitably the arrangements for staffing London's interchange stations are dependent on the policy of the organisation which manages them. They may be staffed by either London Underground, a train operating company, Network Rail or a combination of these. Stations managed by London Underground and London Overground will have staff present from first to last train service. Conversely the majority of DLR stations are unstaffed, although a customer service agent travels on every train. The arrangements for stations managed by train operating companies vary according to the terms of their franchises, but, although not every station will be staffed when trains are running, in practice, subject to very few exceptions, every interchange station will be staffed.

#### **Ticket sales**

Whilst there have been huge changes in the way passengers pay for their journeys with the introduction of online sales and smart ticketing, research for this report confirmed that passengers still regard the selling of tickets as the primary function of staff at stations. It is important that, at the very least, a member of staff should be available to advise and assist passengers with buying tickets whenever trains are running from an interchange station. Passengers should be able to buy all types of tickets for all services at the interchange from all members of staff, regardless of which operator they work for.

Focus group participants told us that they expect staff to be working in ticket offices, though most acknowledge that a more flexible role could be beneficial to passengers in some situations. Rather than being 'confined' to a ticket office, passengers accept that 'floating' staff, selling tickets from a portable ticket vending machine rather than from behind a counter, may be able to meet a wider variety of customer needs, especially at smaller stations. Wherever they are located, the important thing for passengers is that members of staff are visible and readily available to help passengers purchase tickets.

## Help and advice

The second major role for staff is to provide help and advice. In this respect, passengers told us that staff perform generally well and, indeed, they had seen an improvement in recent years. The crucial issue for passengers is not just the availability of staff, but their willingness and ability to provide help and advice on all services, regardless of which organisation the member of staff works for. This is particularly important at interchanges due to the potential complexities of making onward connections.

*"It would be useful to know whether staff have knowledge and information available on the surrounding area as well as the services that run from the station." [Focus group participant]*

Systems should be in place so that all public-facing staff at interchanges have the knowledge and appropriate tools to provide timely and useful information to passengers about all transport services in and around the core train or bus station regardless of who they are operated by. At large terminal stations and key interchanges on routes to airports at least one member of staff should be able to speak key foreign languages.

If the need to interchange between one or more different services can be daunting for passengers unfamiliar with the journey, it is far worse for disabled passengers, many of whom may not even attempt to use public transport because of this.

Transport operators generally have systems in place for passengers who need additional help from staff to physically navigate the interchange and to board the train or bus. London Underground and London Overground now provide a 'turn-up-and-go' service for disabled and other passengers needing assistance so they do not need to organise this before they travel. Passengers using National Rail services can book assistance in advance through the Passenger Assist system, although recently some of the London train operating companies have begun a small-scale trial of turn-up-and-go assistance at 36 stations. This is welcomed.

Despite problems of consistency in assisting disabled passengers, the rail industry is generally good at helping passengers change trains, even when



they are run by different train operators, with 75% of disabled passengers being satisfied overall with their journey experience.<sup>10</sup> However, this relates only to rail journeys and much more needs to be done to help disabled passengers who need to change onto other modes of transport or to cross London to continue their rail journey from a different station.

From time to time, London TravelWatch receives feedback relating to the problems experienced by disabled passengers who need to get from one major rail terminal to another but struggle because of a lack of coordination between transport operators. For example, there is no system in place to assist a disabled passenger who arrives at Waterloo Station on a National Rail service, then transfers to the London Underground to get to Euston Station to catch an onward National Rail service. We were particularly concerned to hear from one wheelchair user how, on arriving at a major rail terminal station, she and another disabled passenger were effectively stranded. They were unable to exit the train without a ramp and neither the train operator nor station staff were available to help.

Assistance for disabled passengers needs to be coordinated between different operators, especially given the number of operators comprising London's transport network. The involvement of London Underground in National Rail's Passenger Assist system would be an important step forward.

Interchanging between the public transport system and airports can be even more problematic because the system of transferring responsibility for disabled passengers from one to the other is less established. Airlines, airports, Transport for London, train operators, Network Rail, and long-distance coach operators also need to work together to put in place a mechanism for properly joining up support.

## Passenger safety

Despite overall crime on the public transport system being relatively low, anti-social behaviour and fear of crime remain a concern for passengers and can create a disincentive to people using public transport. All passengers have the right to feel safe and not to be confronted by anti-social behaviour on journeys using public transport. Since passengers spend more time at interchanges, either while travelling through larger stations or



**A clearly identified member of staff at Waterloo Underground Station helps ensure rules are enforced and increases the sense of personal security**

<sup>10</sup> Passenger Focus (2014), *Passenger Assist – March 2014*. See also: Office of Rail Regulation (2014). *Disabled people's protection policies: a regulatory statement – July 2014*.

while waiting to catch the next leg of their journey, they have a greater risk of being confronted by anti-social behaviour. The presence of staff can play a big role in increasing security, deterring poor behaviour and generally improving the passenger experience at interchanges.

Rules need to be enforced to ensure passenger safety and comfort. On all modes of transport, there are established rules of conduct for passengers set out in the Conditions of Carriage and byelaws to prevent anti-social behaviour on the public transport network, however these rules mean nothing if they are not enforced. The visible presence of staff at rail and bus stations helps to deter crime and low-level disorder, to ensure that rules are enforced, and to ensure that all passengers have a safe journey.

Passengers want interchanges to be staffed at all hours of operation to provide a greater sense of safety particularly at night.

## 5.2 The management of interchanges

Interchanges are often served by several transport modes and operators but despite the complexity of managing interchanges, passengers think of an interchange as a single entity and expect it to be managed as such. They want the same high quality of service regardless of who manages the interchange, or parts of the interchange, and they don't want ownership issues to detract from the maintenance and development of the infrastructure, or from the quality of travel information about the services of all transport operators in and around the station.



**The One Team Transport banner brought together all of the transport industry during the 2012 Games.**

Source: James Blunt Photography

Collaboration between transport providers is a difficult task. There are institutional, cultural, commercial and practical barriers that have to be overcome if passengers are to be served as well as they could be at interchanges, particularly at interchanges served by more than one operator. Yet the industry has shown that it can collaborate effectively in the interest of passengers.

When London hosted the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games, the transport industry worked together to provide a single transport network. Under the banner of '*One Team Transport*', operators delivered

a seamless, integrated transport service for the duration of the Games. The lessons learned in 2012 should become part of the ‘day job’ for the transport industry in London.

We want to see this type of coordination and collaboration rolled out more widely – on a pan-London basis – at major interchanges, centred at rail terminal stations and all other interchange points.

Stratford Station is a particularly complex interchange, one that is served by two different rail operators, the DLR and two London Underground lines. Other than the DLR, all these companies have their own staff present at the station, and there are also TfL staff running the adjacent bus station. A positive legacy of the 2012 Games is that one operator (London Underground) continues to take overall responsibility for coordinating the operation of the station. Unfortunately, so far as customer service is concerned, the staff working in and around the interchange are still separately managed, focussing on their own services and not necessarily able to give advice to passengers about services provided by other operators.

We welcome the initiative taken by South West Trains and Network Rail at Waterloo Station to consolidate passenger-facing staff from both partner companies into one management system, wearing a common uniform. This has improved the ability of staff to assist passengers, reducing potential confusion and reinforcing the commitment of the two organisations to provide a single, integrated service for passengers.

The period of major disruption at London Bridge Station at the end of 2014 led to the introduction of a ‘*Team London Bridge*’ approach earlier this year, which means passengers can easily find staff in high visibility magenta tabards who can give comprehensive advice about station services and onward travel.

Apart from major London terminals and major national hubs, National Rail stations are generally owned by Network Rail and leased to the train company or companies who manage the station. Both station owner and station manager have some responsibility for the upkeep and development of the physical infrastructure.

In addition, nearby bus and tram stations and services should be integrated within the operation of the whole interchange and managed accordingly. Some bus stations are best managed by bus station staff, others will benefit if the local rail operator takes some responsibility for their management - at the very least station staff should contact TfL when they see problems arising at unstaffed stops adjacent to the station. For example, at bus stops outside East Croydon Station problems can quickly build up in the evening peak if the trams are not running. Ideally TfL should have staff on site at such times but if they do not, station staff should know who to call when things go wrong.

The lack of coordination between station managers and operators that serve an interchange can also have an effect on the facilities available to passengers. For example, the station manager for Barking Station is the train company c2c, while the station is served by both c2c and London Underground trains. However, the platforms used by London Underground passengers contain no London Underground network maps. The absence of common standards means that passengers using services other than those of the station manager are denied the full range of facilities that would be available to them if the station was managed by the operator they were travelling with. There should be a systematic review of the standards for interchange stations, particularly when National Rail franchises are tendered and/or stations are redeveloped.



**Victoria Coach Station ticket office sells tickets for all coach operators serving the station, including TfL Oyster products.**

As a point of comparison, Victoria Coach Station is operated by TfL and served by 10 coach operators serving all parts of the UK and continental Europe. The station is one of the best interchanges in London from a passenger perspective, with a good coach service and onward journey information, and an integrated ticket office selling tickets for all coach operators' services and Oyster products. Interchange station managers could learn much from the operation of Victoria Coach Station.

Contractual incentives should be established to improve the level of service provided by the managers of interchange stations. As an example, coach operators serving Victoria Coach Station pay the station manager, which is TfL, to manage the station, with certain contractual requirements established between parties. Similar incentives for station managers and contractual requirements between operators serving interchanges should

be established to ensure the best possible management of interchange stations in the interest of improving passenger journeys.

## Unplanned disruption

Service disruptions occur throughout London's transport network, but their impact is felt most acutely at interchanges because of the potential knock-on effect to connecting services. Interchange stations, especially London's major rail terminals, can quickly become overcrowded during service disruptions.

When things go wrong passengers really need the industry to work together to provide timely and reliable information on disruption, including information about the nature of the disruption and alternative journey options. Transport operators must work together to provide this, not only for the London-wide network, but also at specific interchange stations where the services of multiple operators may be affected by the disruption. Research consistently shows that passengers do not believe service disruption is well-handled by train companies.<sup>11</sup>

To help individual passengers and to ease congestion at pinchpoints during incidents of disruption, people need to be given clear information before they reach the point of disruption. Many people will then be able to travel on other services or interchange at different stations.

For example, if someone living in South Tower Hill area is told that London Bridge choose to take the DLR to Shadwell and take a London Overground train home instead. Similarly, if the disruption is on the Thameslink route and they are given clear information about this as they enter Tower Hill or Bank stations, as well as on the train, they can stay on the train to Victoria and travel home on an alternative service rather than getting off at Blackfriars to swell the number of passengers already waiting for the delayed trains. Clear announcements on buses would also help with this.

A unified approach, with joint staff training and information sharing between operators can help ensure that all staff understand passenger needs during

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<sup>11</sup> Passenger Focus (2014). *National Rail Passenger Survey: Autumn 2014 Main Report*. p.53



disruptions and will help to prevent the dissemination of conflicting information on service disruption, a risk that is increasing with the diversity of sources from which transport information can now be acquired.

During periods of service disruption, particularly unplanned, passengers are much more in need of information to help them continue their journey. Our focus group participants acknowledged that the greater availability of real-time information and social media helps meet some of these needs during disruption, yet they also pointed out that when services become disrupted, so too can the quality of the information. It is also important to remember that not all passengers have ready access to social media.

Passengers should not have more information on service disruption than staff, who need to be able to access up to date information. Even when information about unplanned disruption is not immediately available, passengers need prompt and regular reassurance that staff are actively seeking further information about what has happened, what is being done about it and how it might affect them.



**TfL hoardings let passengers know the benefits of works associated with the disruption at Victoria**

Most rail and bus interchanges in London are busy and noisy places, and this gets rapidly worse when services are disrupted and crowds build up on platforms and concourses. In these situations, it can be difficult to hear public announcements. Mechanisms must be put in place to enable staff to override pre-recorded announcements to make it easier to distinguish the latest information being given about services. This may mean temporarily suspending standard security announcements and giving staff megaphones so they can be more easily heard.

### **Disruption associated with major works**

Passengers in London will continue to suffer disruption whilst a series of major construction works take place at several London rail terminals and as part of the Crossrail, Thameslink, and London Underground major upgrade programmes. These works are necessary to provide additional capacity, but they are very disruptive to passengers and will affect journeys over the medium term, not just at the stations themselves but also people using the surrounding streets or bus services. For example, at London Bridge Station,

the Thameslink Programme works are in their second of five years, while the Victoria Station upgrade is in its third year of seven.

The following table summarises major works planned in London over the next five to 10 years.

<b>Project</b>	<b>Status</b>	<b>Scheduled</b>
Victoria Station upgrade	In construction	To be completed in 2018
Thameslink London Bridge project	In construction	To be completed in 2018
Finsbury Park (new ticket hall)	Delayed	Developer's timetable
Waterloo (platform extension and rebuild)	Programmed	February 2017
Whitechapel (Crossrail)	In construction	To be completed in 2018
Farringdon (Crossrail)	In construction	To be completed in 2018
Bond Street (Crossrail)	In construction	To be completed in 2017
Bank	Design stage	Scheduled completion 2021
Croxley Link	Preparation stage	Scheduled completion 2018
Paddington (Crossrail)	In construction	To be completed in 2018
East Croydon (additional platforms)	Design stage	TBC

Passengers need to know what is going on at their station. They experience the disruption associated with rebuilding but are often unaware of the future gain. Large-scale projects should include a work stream to tell passengers about the works that are being undertaken, the benefits for passengers that will result from them, and the timescales. However, this information should also be honest and realistic about the level of associated disruption and reduced service that they will continue to experience throughout the project.

London's multi-operator Travel Demand Management (TDM) Board builds upon the collaborative approach that was established between providers and operators during the 2012 Olympic and Paralympic Games to ensure that the transport network operated effectively despite the increasing demands upon it. The TDM Board has coordinated the information given to passengers affected by the planned service disruption associated with the Thameslink upgrade programme. The overall aim was to encourage and enable passengers to change their travel behaviour by giving clear information about the impact of service changes and which alternative travel arrangements are possible, often by interchanging at a different point along their journey.

The TDM Board has now extended its remit to become a pan-London Board which not only oversees the arrangements of planned widescale service disruptions but also reviews incidents of unplanned service

disruption so that lessons can be learned collectively and cascaded back into all relevant organisations.

London TravelWatch attends all meetings to ensure the passenger perspective remains central to discussions. We are optimistic that this multi-modal approach will help to drive improved working at major interchanges across London.

### Long-term, temporary signage

Where a major station, or something beside it is being reconfigured over a long, albeit temporary, period, different signage must be provided so that passengers, particularly those unfamiliar with the area, are able to find their way to and around the station and its surrounding area. Passengers need clear and consistent signage, even for 'temporary' works, and this needs to be amended as often as the disruption associated with the construction works changes.

A poor example of this is signage and wayfinding around the Victoria Station Upgrade work site. The redevelopment works began in 2011 and are set for completion in 2018, with vehicle and pedestrian flows being regularly re-routed throughout the course of the project. Large areas around the station are blocked off by hoardings, which severely restrict sightlines.



**The different types of signs at Victoria Station make pedestrian wayfinding inconsistent and confusing but the fact that they now exist is an improvement**

This situation calls for effective signage and wayfinding for pedestrians trying to get to and from the station, especially as it is used by many tourists unfamiliar with the area. However, there has been an uncoordinated approach which has led to inconsistent placement of information around the site, especially as the walking routes continually change. There are multiple types of signs (e.g. white on red construction site signs, yellow on black pedestrian signage, white on black signage).

Following London TravelWatch's representations to TfL we have been assured that there will be a thorough review of the signage and that improvements will be made.

Signage and wayfinding around long-term, temporary work sites should always be clear, consistent and relevant to the passenger from the outset of redevelopment works. As has been mentioned throughout this report, signage should be to a single industry standard, yet bespoke to the location. Passengers must have better long-term, temporary signage at interchange stations affected by planned works.

### 5.3 Recommendations for the staffing and management of interchanges

Transport operators and other relevant agencies should:

- Ensure staff are visible and available to help passengers buy tickets and to provide help and advice to passengers on all services operating in and around the interchange from first to last service:
  - station staff should be empowered to override pre-recorded announcements during times of disruption to focus passenger information on the disruption itself
  - systems to assist passengers with particular travel needs should be improved, especially between different operators and transport modes
  - staff should be present and enforcing the rules from first to last service to increase passengers' sense of security in and around stations
- Improve station management arrangements:
  - there should be seamless, integrated management of interchanges, including for nearby bus, tram and coach services
  - where more than one operator serves an interchange, passenger-facing staff should be consolidated under one management system
  - standards for the management of multi-operator interchange stations should be systematically reviewed when franchises and concessions are re-let
  - station managers should be encouraged to work with other operators to ensure the best possible management of interchange stations from the perspective of passengers
- Improve passenger information at times of disruption:
  - operators and service providers should work together to improve passenger journeys during both planned and unplanned service disruptions and provide timely information as to how passengers may undertake their journey during the works
  - operators and service providers should keep passengers up to date about what is happening to their stations and let them know what the eventual benefits of the upgrades will be for them

- during periods of major construction works operators and providers should ensure that high quality temporary signage is provided around interchange points and that this is updated at each phase of the work



## 6 Conclusion

London's transport system requires effective interchange arrangements to better accommodate an increasing number of passengers and additions to the network. Commuters and first-time visitors alike want their journeys to be as direct and easy as possible, and to limit the amount of 'involuntary time' spent interchanging. Yet the majority of journeys in the capital do involve at least one change and this is why it is so important to get it right from a passenger perspective. As we made clear at the beginning of this report, interchange matters.

The importance of effective interchange increases as we look ahead to new services, including Crossrail 1 and 2, HS2, and extensions to the Northern and Bakerloo London Underground lines. Efforts to increase transport capacity must be accompanied by an equal endeavour to improve the effectiveness of how each individual service interacts with others, particularly from the viewpoint of passengers using an interchange. The current debate about the optimal routing of, for example, Crossrail 2 and HS2, rests mainly upon how these new services will integrate with the existing network. However, we should not only be looking at the most effective placement for interchange, but equally to the quality of navigation within and beyond the interchange and, ultimately, to improve the overall quality of the passenger experience at all stages of their journey. Interchange stations can be more complex to navigate both within and beyond than single-service stations and especially when more than one operator serves an interchange.

There are several large-scale interchange improvement projects either underway (e.g. London Bridge Station) or planned (e.g. Euston Station) involving significant costs, which will improve the quality of interchange, however most of the recommendations in this report call for simple and inexpensive interventions. One inexpensive option would be for TfL and ATOC to better promote interchanges that are presently unknown to most passengers. The public should be informed about the opportunities to improve journeys by using walkable interchanges between stations. These opportunities could ease passenger journeys and relieve pressure on the busiest parts of the network, and some are recognised in the fare structure so can be made at no extra cost.

Interchange stations need to cater for vulnerable travellers, such as elderly and disabled passengers, those travelling with luggage or children, as well as to those unfamiliar with either a particular station or the network. We want the industry to ensure that attention is paid to sometimes overlooked details, such as layout, information and signage at interchanges.

Collaboration between transport providers and modes is also a critical element of interchange across the London network. London TravelWatch commends the efforts of the industry to cooperate more closely for the benefit of the passenger, and welcomes commitments to continuing similar

forms of collaboration for planned disruptions due to future upgrade work and major events affecting London's interchanges. Greater and more effective coordination in the services provided by the various providers is crucial to the success of London's transport network, particularly at points of interchange.

Nevertheless, greater coordination between London's transport providers requires that all have a similar mandate to work in the interest of passengers, which is not always the case. Effective interchange between the services of different transport providers rests upon this unified focus on the needs of the passenger and a willingness to help resolve problems and provide information about services run by other operators.

Good interchanges make travel easier for all passengers. For some, it can be the difference between being able to use London's transport system or not, especially when stations and/or platforms are not all consistently accessible to passengers with disabilities. At a strategic level, improving the interchange experience is crucial as it helps to optimise the capacity of rail, underground and bus services in a growing London. A linked trip is only as good as all of its parts.

There is some good practice currently out there, however there is much room for improvement. This report demonstrates that many improvements can be straightforward and inexpensive. Passengers are not necessarily looking for a complete overhaul of stations, but rather improvements to the smaller details relating to better accessibility and layout, better information and signage, and well-informed staff. There are understandable challenges to using existing, sometimes historic, infrastructure. However, there is no excuse for interchange points in new infrastructure projects such as might be provided at Old Oak Common not to provide passengers with a 'five star' experience.

Interchange station developers and operators should consider the elements highlighted in this report and pay particular attention to accessibility and layout. Equally crucial for effective interchange is consistent and planned coordination between the different station operators and transport providers that interconnect to serve London's multi-modal public transport network. Greater coordination with local authorities, local businesses and service providers – perhaps within a dedicated 'Station Travel Plan' – will help improve the areas outside and between stations, as well as the connections to area services.

Assessing the quality of interchanges in the capital should be an on-going exercise. This is why we have developed a mystery shopper-style questionnaire (available on our website) to encourage both industry professionals and everyday passengers to evaluate for themselves the interchanges they use and to feedback their findings.

By looking at interchange from the passenger perspective and working together effectively to make needed improvements, we will move towards more five star interchanges in London.

Interchange matters: Passenger  
priorities for improvement

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