

Report of the Transport Users Engagement Event Held in Lewisham

July 2013

Report on the Transport Users Engagement Event held by London TravelWatch



London TravelWatch is the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public.

Our role is to:

- Speak up for transport users in discussions with policy-makers and the media
- Liaise with the transport industry, its regulators and funders on matters affecting users and respond to their consultations
- Investigate complaints users have been unable to resolve with service providers, and
- Monitor trends in service quality.

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.

Published by:

London TravelWatch
Dexter House
2 Royal Mint Court
London EC3N 4QN

Phone: 020 3176 2999
Fax: 020 3176 5991

Contents

| | | |
|----------|--|-----------|
| 1 | Lewisham transport users' engagement event..... | 3 |
| 2 | Travel survey findings..... | 5 |
| | Journey purpose, frequency and modes of transport | 5 |
| | Profile of respondents to the survey | 7 |
| | Ticket types used by respondents..... | 9 |
| | General feedback | 10 |
| 3 | Conclusions | 12 |
| | Appendix A: Selection of comments..... | 13 |
| | Appendix B: Findings from the previous surgeries..... | 17 |

1 Lewisham transport users' engagement event

As part of its stakeholder engagement work during 2012/13 London TravelWatch held an event to engage with transport users in Lewisham following successful events in Harrow, Tooting, Stratford, Croydon and Romford which were inspired by Bus Users' UK's successful and long-running 'bus surgeries'.

Lewisham is a major local transport hub, lying on the A20 road towards Dover and at the start of A21 to Hastings, with a large bus station alongside the National Rail station (once known as Lewisham Junction) and the southern terminus of the Docklands Light Railway. The Lewisham area is identified in the London Plan as one of 35 major centres in Greater London. It has a population of 275,900, with around 54,000 under 16 and around 25,000 over 65. Around a third of the population is from the BME (Black and Minority Ethnic) communities with a large number of Afro-Caribbean residents.

There are 20 national rail stations in Lewisham with London Overground lines running into the north of the Borough at New Cross station and New Cross Gate station. Other services are provided by Southern and Southeastern. There are no Tube stations in the Borough, but it is served by three DLR stations: Deptford Bridge and Elverson Road, which are both on the Lewisham/Greenwich border, and Lewisham. The nearest stations that can resolve Oyster queries are London Bridge, Canada Water and Canary Wharf.

It was decided to hold an event in Lewisham to engage with residents on several key local issues including the new Southeastern rail franchise and the Bakerloo Line extension to Hayes via Lewisham and Catford.

The Lewisham Transport Users Engagement Event took place on Wednesday 20 March between 10.30am and 2.30pm on a New Bus For London parked next to Lewisham Shopping Centre in the middle of the busy market in the town centre. It offered an opportunity to speak face-to-face with users of transport services and to explain how London TravelWatch could help them and learn more about transport users' journey patterns and concerns in different parts of London. The event also provided an opportunity for local people to see the Mayor's 'New Bus for London' for themselves.

Other attendees apart from London TravelWatch staff included members of local transport user groups such as Lewisham rail users group, someone from TfL, representatives from several bus companies and Southeastern. The Arriva bus driver and conductor were very helpful and friendly and answered questions from the public. Members of the Casework Team were on hand to take complaints on the day.

Lewisham town centre was very busy throughout the time that London TravelWatch was there. We spoke to around 800 people and they were generally positive about transport in their area and about the New Bus For

London. A number of people commented about improvements they would like to see made to the design of the bus and several other issues were raised, including disabled access and the cost of fares.

We handed out our new Oyster card holders and inserts, promotional bags and pens, copies of our money saving tips and a questionnaire which people could either fill in on the day or take away and post back.



2 Travel survey findings

At the engagement event, London TravelWatch handed out around 560 surveys to transport users. The aims of the survey were to establish the travel patterns of transport users in Lewisham and gain a more in depth understanding of key public transport issues for people living in the area. A total of 156 completed surveys were returned to us, either on the day or by post; a response rate of around 28%. This was the same as the response rate from our Harrow event and significantly higher than the response rate from most of our previous events.

The survey provides a snapshot of transport users' experiences in a busy part of south east London. The findings are not statistically significant but provide an interesting insight into the travel patterns and needs of transport users in Lewisham. There was a prize draw to encourage participants to return the survey with a prize of a £50 Oyster card for the winner.

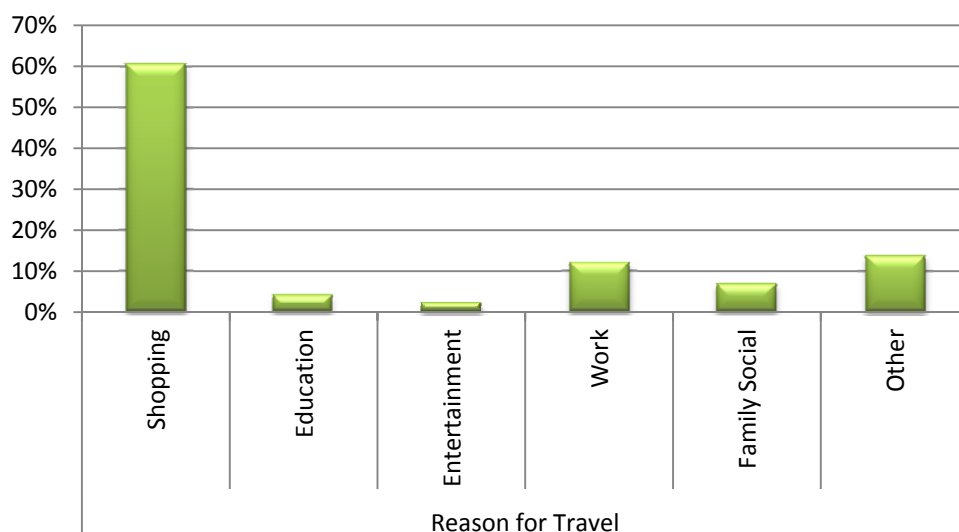
The survey is available online at:

www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/documents/transportsurvey

Journey purpose, frequency and modes of transport

The first section of the survey looks at the reasons for travelling, how frequently people travel, the mode of transport they use and why. The majority of respondents' reason for travel was shopping (61%), followed by other (14%) and travelling to/from work (12%). The percentage of people travelling to do shopping was similar to the Romford and Croydon events but significantly higher than in Tooting or Stratford.

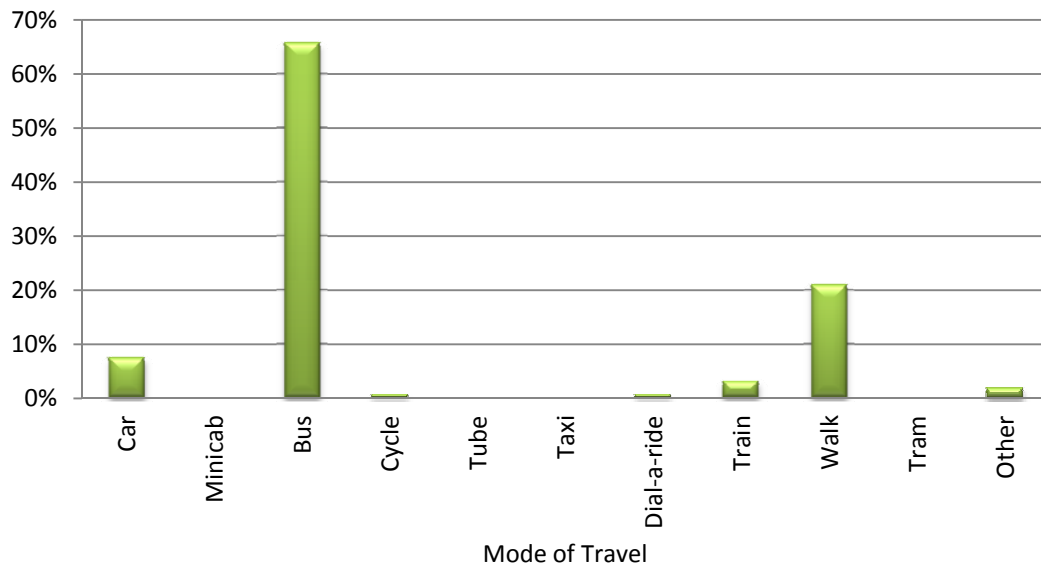
Graph 1 – Respondents' reason for travel on the day of the survey



Two thirds of people surveyed had used the bus to travel into Lewisham town centre, more than any of our previous events and a significant number of people walked (21%) as they had done at previous events. The next most

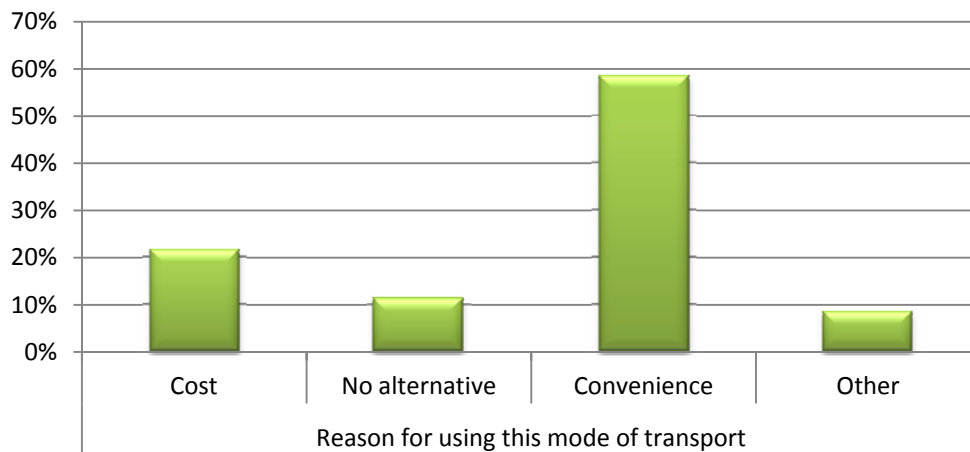
popular means of transport into the town centre was car (7%), significantly less than all the other areas we have visited with the exception of Tooting.

Graph 2 – Modes of travel used by respondents on day of the survey



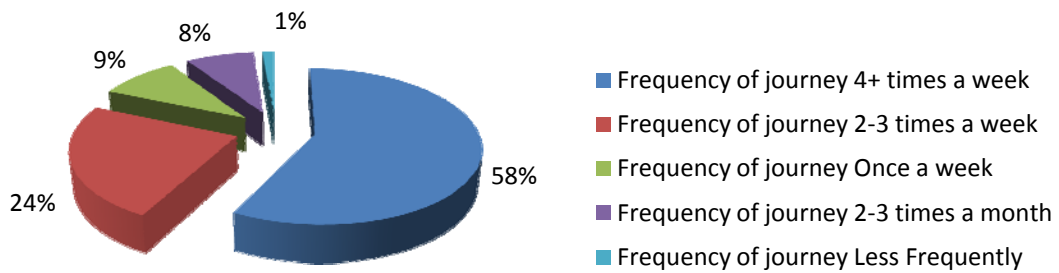
Convenience was clearly very important to respondents when they chose which method of transport to use, with over 60% of people listing this reason – a similar result to the one we found at our previous events. Over 20% of respondents said that the cost was the reason why they chose their method of transport.

Graph 3 – Reason for choosing a mode of travel



The respondents to our survey tended to be regular visitors to Lewisham with 58% making the journey they made on the day of the event four or more times a week and 24% making it two to three times a week. These findings are broadly similar to responses received at previous events which is interesting as while you might have expected people around in the town centre during the week to regularly make that journey you might not necessarily expect them to make the same journey at the weekend (as they did in Tooting and Harrow).

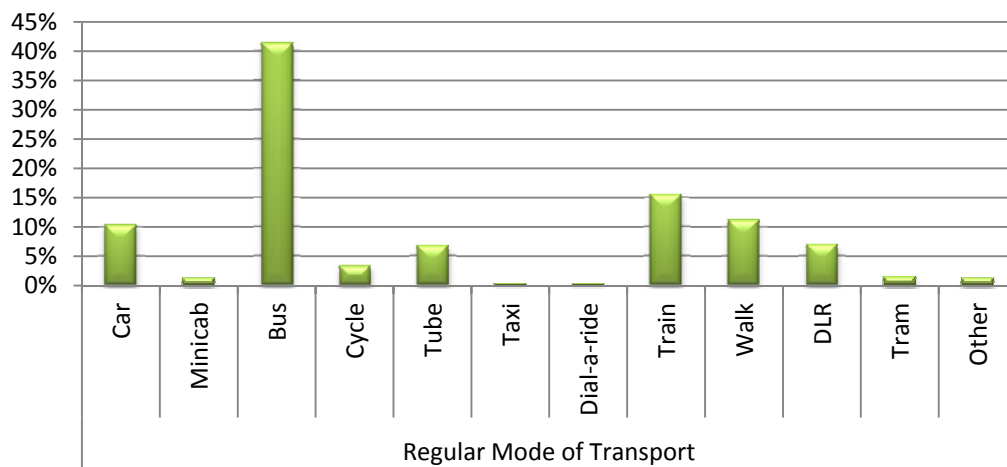
Graph 4 – Frequency of travel by survey respondents



When respondents listed the regular modes of transport they used, the bus (41%) and the train (16%) were the most popular. 11% of respondents said that they regularly walked, while 10% said they regularly travelled by car. Both the tube and DLR were each regularly used by 7% of passengers.

Bus usage was similar to Tooting and Harrow but much lower than Romford and Stratford where around 80% of people regularly used the bus. A similar percentage of respondents regularly travelled by train as in Tooting and Harrow; this was less than half the level in Stratford and Romford although these areas also had a much higher use of the car.

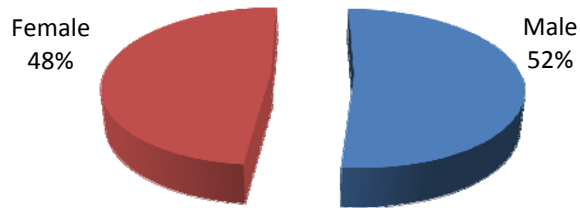
Graph 5 – Regular mode of transport used by respondents to the survey



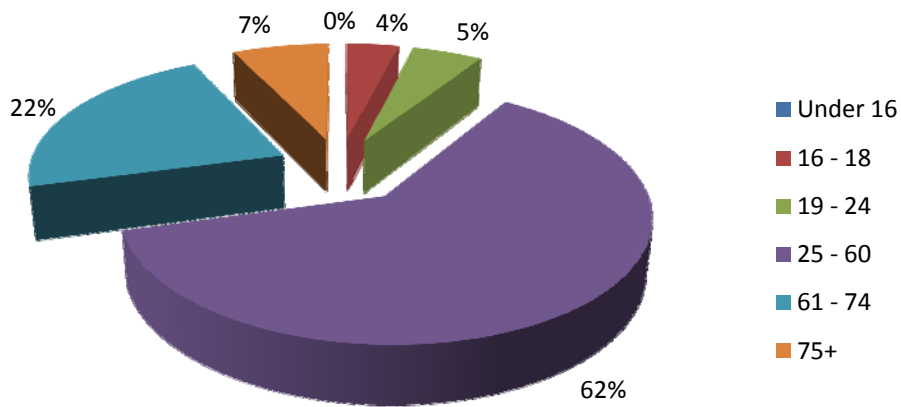
Profile of respondents to the survey

The gender balance of survey respondents was roughly equal (male 52%, female 48%). Over 60% of respondents were aged between 25 and 60 years old, with 22% of respondents aged between 61 and 74 years old, broadly similar to in previous surveys. Around half of respondents were white, 32% identified themselves as 'Black' and 6% as 'Asian'. 45% of respondents said that they did not travel with children. 18% of respondents said that they have difficulty walking, a similar percentage as all the other areas we have visited except Tooting.

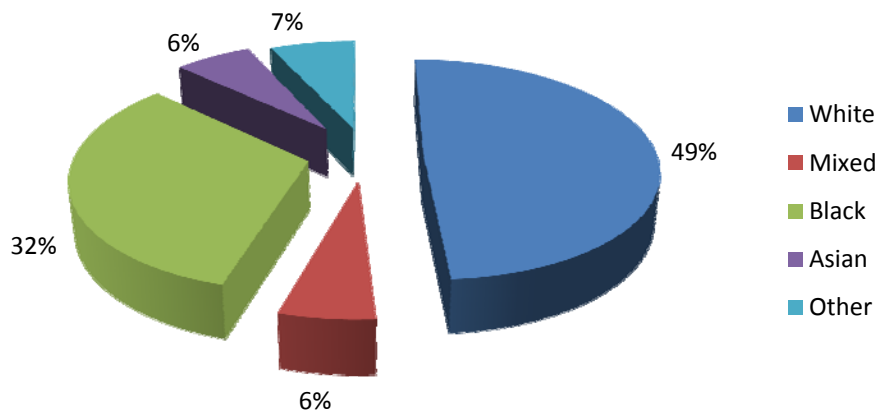
Graph 6 – Gender of respondents



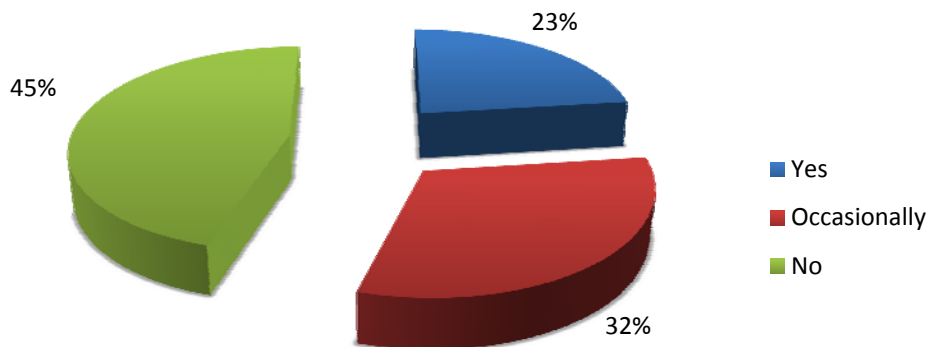
Graph 7 – Age profile of survey respondents



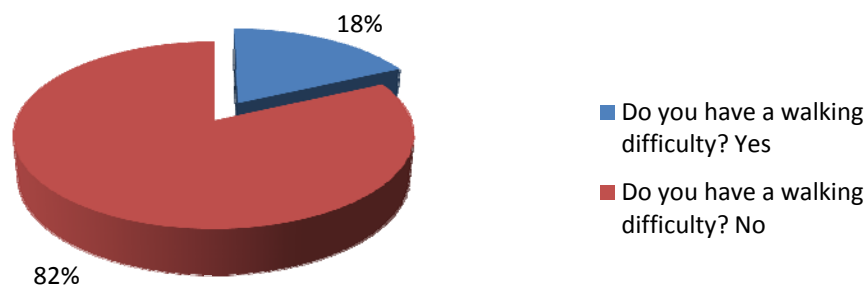
Graph 8 – Percentage of survey respondents by ethnic group



Graph 9 – Respondents travelling with or without children



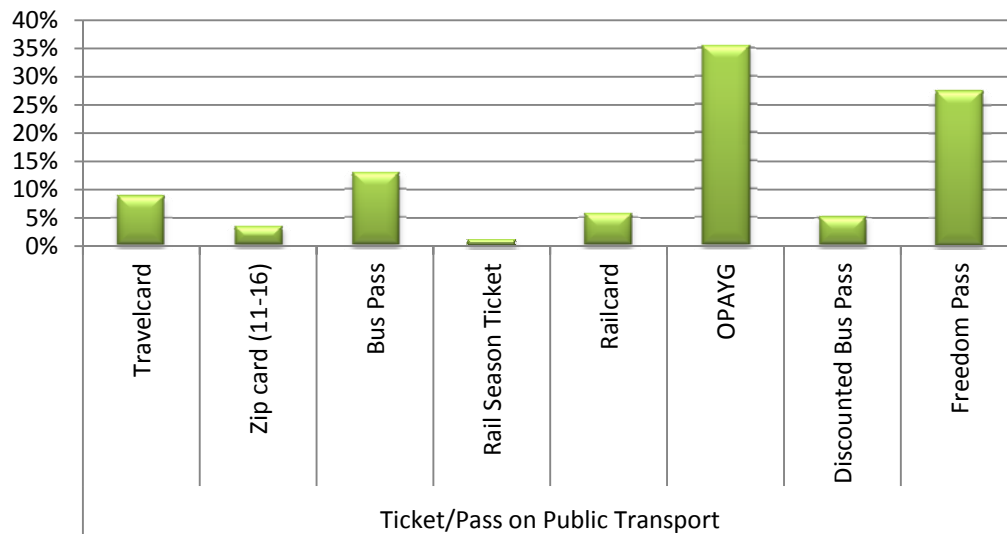
Graph 10 – Percentage of survey respondents who do or do not have difficulty walking



Ticket types used by respondents

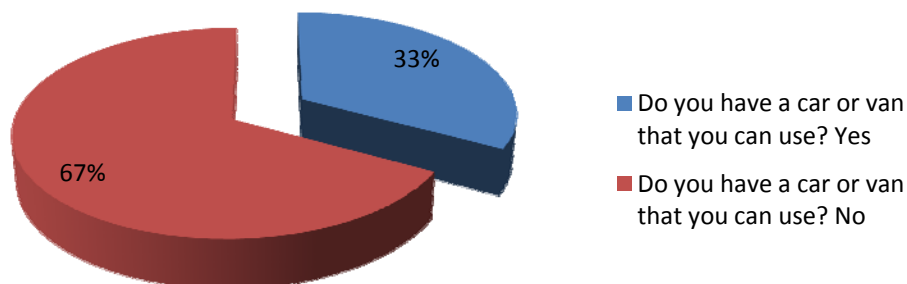
The majority of respondents (35%) said that they used Oyster Pay As You Go (OPAYG), similar to Stratford and Tooting and slightly lower than in Croydon and Romford. 28% used a Freedom Pass, again similar to Stratford and Tooting but significantly less than Croydon and Romford. 9% used a Travelcard, a lower percentage than at any of our other events.

Graph 11 – Ticket types used by survey respondents



A third of people had access to a car or van, similar to Tooting but significantly less than the other areas we have held events in.

Graph 12 – Survey respondents travelling who do or do not have access to a car or van



General feedback

Many of the people we surveyed commented that they were happy with public transport in the local area, particularly freedom pass holders.

Much of the feedback resonated with our transport users' priorities, in particular the 'A transport network open to all' and 'Enforcing the rules' priorities. Issues which came up during the day and were mentioned in a number of survey responses include drivers not pulling up to the kerb to let disabled passengers in wheelchairs board the bus, concerns about fares and fare increases, concerns about anti-social behaviour and a lack of space on board buses for wheelchairs/buggies.

Some transport users raised specific points about congestion on Southeastern services, especially during peak times. Other, more specific issues raised included praise for new/improved walking routes implemented by Lewisham Council and suggestions for improvements to local bus services.

3 Conclusions

London TravelWatch's transport users' engagement events give us a chance to speak to transport users directly, providing them with an opportunity to tell us about any everyday transport concerns they have, as well as telling us when things are working well, which we can feedback to transport providers to resolve or use as a best practice example. We manage to reach people we do not often speak to directly and it gives staff the chance to keep in touch with the concerns of passengers 'on the ground'.

The events are also a way of raising awareness of the work that London TravelWatch does and explaining what we do and what we can do for the travelling public within specific areas, especially amongst people who may not fit the profile of our usual complainants. In Lewisham, one of our staff was also able to talk to several people who did not speak English as their first language.

While the surveys are not necessarily statistically significant, they do provide an interesting snapshot of travel patterns on a Wednesday in a busy outer London area.

The event also allowed us to build contacts/raise awareness amongst individuals and groups in the Lewisham area which last beyond the event itself. A number of people from Lewisham found out about us at or because of our user engagement event and are now following us on Twitter/retweeting our tweets and we are still receiving a number of website referrals from sites based in and around Lewisham.

Appendix A: A selection of comments made by survey respondents

The following are a selection of comments from the completed surveys:

Bus is easier for me

It's great especially when traffic is low

Quite good transport in the Woolwich area

Driver's not asking buggy to vacate wheelchair bay - hospital appointment

Brilliant buses in this area - I can get anywhere. I use buses rather than trains because of cost and I don't have to pay for children!!

Pampering day as my birthday yesterday. Not a lot of buggy space and time to wait for a bus with space for too long!

Love what I saw - the red, Clean!!! New interior. Hoping to see them in use. Please try to keep buses to the timetable - hate it when they are late!!!

The transport in my area is getting better in regards to the time schedule. We will appreciate it if it is on time. We will also appreciate it if they have a zero tolerance approach to anti social behaviour.

You should clean your buses thoroughly using nice scented cleaning detergent, people will be happy, disgusted with drivers, thanks brilliant service.

I've raised questions about an upgrade to Hither Green station so it's easier for disabled/elderly/carers with pushchairs. The response was (from S.E. Trains) that Hither Green was insufficiently busy - nonsense! Also new flats have been built next to station.

There is a bit of inconvenience for taller passengers on the New Bus For London

I am sure I want London to be a world class city with world class transport system.

The transport system is great but I am not happy about the increase of the fare every year. The heating system is very, very poor.

New Routemaster: 1) Upstairs: Window (Rear) not visible when seated. Important at bus interchanges. 2) Oyster PAYG: When will the buses offer tap-in adjoining bus services? 3) Bus conductors: Run this as a peak service only (7am - 7pm) so, it only runs with a conductor.

Transport is very frequent

I live (in) Lee when I want to go to Lewisham hospital or Catford, I take 2 buses (122). That is expensive. I want (to) use 2 time oyster card.

Fairly good, no complaining

The bus is very very good

Very portable and long bus, (during) rush hour it would take more people

The bus is nice and lovely, kind of cool

Buses travel too fast down the high street. Can or how do we restrict speeds- dangerous for pedestrian shoppers.

Bus stop is quite a distance to catch bus when getting to work. I think it will make me more fit with exercise.

Transport for London good but fares are very expensive but otherwise transport is good. Can do with some improvements.

Information on bus arrival times displayed at bus stops is very helpful. Please install the system at more bus stops. The 'Boris Bus'- just one big dislike: the headroom on the upper deck is worse than on normal buses. Why? It makes the upper deck unpleasant to use.

I like the new buses 'hop on and off' again! There's not enough space considered for wheelchairs and buggies. The space needs to be bigger! With fold up seats.

I really like this new bus and will be glad to have conductors back. It is a mix of new and old. I like the 2 staircases. Good choice!

2 stairs good idea

Junction near to the clock tower is dangerous for all road users. Creates a queue and gridlock. A cyclist was crushed against a railing- TFL Junction.

Local buses very good when drivers are able to lower the step on and off the bus. Many push chairs, seem to think they have the right over the other passengers. They expect people to move out of the way for them, even the elderly.

The DLR and Overground rail services have made an enormous difference to this area. Also the 286/386 buses.

Generally we have a very good transport service. We have bus connections to 3 main 'Pinc' train stations also D.L.R. And to several shopping centres. Some drivers seem heavy on the pedals and give a very 'jerky' ride. Pull away before all passengers are seated. Others are more considerate. Q.1 I travel into Lewisham to use the leisure centre (swimming). Q.3 I prefer to travel by public transport. I use the car very occasionally.

Drivers seem to not socialise, and can be abusive to passengers, especially on Route 180. There can be a language problem also. Safe driving skills needed as sharp braking can create unnecessary injuries.

The new London bus is very nice but it is too expensive and it doesn't have enough capacity. The money could have been better spent.

We know we are fortunate where we live in SE10 to have access to good bus services which are frequent. We also live near a DLR train line station. We rarely use

our car- less than once a week because we want to support public transport. Q.2
DLR Q.3 We make an effort to use public transport to reduce carbon emissions and to support public services.

Services run better they did in the past.

Need more leg room.

Would like to see a bus 'disect' from Manor Oak Park/station to Catford or Lewisham.
Possibly extend the 63.

I am 80 years old and so glad to use my freedom pass.

No complaints, very good service.

I would be interested in NPG compass(?) with old route master

There's lots of options and connections to choose from. That's good!

Very expensive. Should be free for disability.

I find it difficult to board buses as they stop far from the curb and I can't lift my legs up when there is a big gap. The drivers refuse to allow me to use the ramp and say 'wait for the next bus.'

Well thought of space and the double exit. Just like the A380 aircraft.

Route 122 from Woolwich garage needs a lot of improvement especially during school hours. Sometimes parents wait from 1530 to 410 before getting bus home.

Well thought out. Carbon efficient. Both exit points are good. Very spacious.

Great memories. Modern and classic.

Why don't bus drivers routinely drop the platform step for elderly people or disabled?

Sometimes the bus is cold. Please can you make the driver put some heating on the bus when it's cold.

I'm finding transportation costs too high. I'm having to walk more often from Catford to Lewisham and Downham. I think this new bus is quite good. More leg room. I like the idea of 2 entrance and exit points but the seats are too hard, and someone needs to be on board at all times to keep order.

Southeastern Trains (Sevenoaks-Blackfriars line) very congested at rush hour. And why no service to St. Pancras int. on weekends?

Would like to see a 'travel at your own risk' sign

Very good

Buses fitted with loop systems (e.g. 199)! The loops seem to function well when the bus is stationary, but not when it's moving. Q.1 To board a Boris bus for the first time; haven't yet managed it on a 38!

The buses are normally pretty good.

Buses are very good

Bus looks nice and more space for disabled person, seat also good.

I can say that I am happy about transport in my area except on Bank Holidays when it is not easy to get a bus in time. And London transport forget that if it is Bank Holiday but still some people work that day and need transport.

Appendix B: Findings from the previous surgeries

Croydon 17th November 2009

For this event, a bus, kindly provided by Arriva London, was parked in North End between 10am and 4:30pm. This is a central location within the town centre close to shops and the market. Croydon was very busy all the time that London TravelWatch were there and we spoke to over 1,000 people on the day, including a wide range of the travelling public – bus users, motorists, pedestrians, cyclists, as well as tram and rail users. The public were generally positive about transport and the complaints and concerns were usually about specific problems, rather than an over-arching pattern. We heard about problems with ramps on buses, and the local bus operators spent time explaining to people what the problems were and how they could try to overcome this. When particular bus routes were mentioned, the operators, in the main, already knew of the problems – usually congestion or routeing. It was also clear how important people's Freedom Passes were to them.

Romford 5th March 2010

For this event, a bus was parked at the South Street end of the Market Place between 10am and 3pm. Romford was less busy than Croydon, and we spoke to more people who never used public transport. In Romford, we found people less satisfied, generally, with the provision of transport in their area. We also heard repeatedly about problems with the specific bus routes owing to roadworks, short turning buses and crowding. We also heard problems about the pedestrianisation of part of the town centre making the buses less convenient. We heard frequent confusion about whether new Freedom Passes could be used immediately.

At both Croydon and Romford, we found many wheelchair users or mobility impaired people who were not aware that all buses in London were now accessible, or how to use the ramps on buses. Following this, we asked TfL to improve the information they provide to disabled users of public transport.

Stratford 24th March 2011

For this event, we parked a bus outside the rail/underground station, which is next to the bus station and opposite a shopping centre between 10am and 4pm. Stratford bus and train station was very busy throughout the time that London TravelWatch was there. We spoke to over 1,000 people on the day, including a wide range of the travelling public – mainly bus users, but also rail, tube, pedestrians, motorists, cyclist and DLR users. The public were generally positive about transport in their area and the complaints and concerns were usually about specific problems, rather than any over-arching pattern.

At both locations, we found many wheelchair users or mobility impaired people who were not aware that all buses in London were now accessible, or how to use the ramps on buses. We were able to give advice and practical demonstrations (along with the local bus operators) on how to use the buses, especially the ramps. In some cases, people who did not use buses said they would in future.

Tooting 10th March 2012

This event took place on Saturday 10 March between 10am and 2pm. Staff were based inside Tooting Broadway Underground Station and outside the entrance to Tooting College and the Sainsburys supermarket. They were also on hand to talk to passers by outside the station.

A lot of the people surveyed commented that they were happy with public transport in the local area but several respondents said that they thought that it was too expensive. Others said that they would like stations to be cleaner and to have better access for the disabled. Access to hospitals was another issue that was raised by some respondents and safety of public transport late at night was also mentioned.

Harrow 10th November 2012

This event took place on Saturday 10 November 2012 between 10am and 1pm. We were based on a New Bus For London parked in Harrow town centre on Station Road and there were also London TravelWatch representatives outside the St George's Shopping Centre and at the Bus Station near Harrow on the Hill underground station.

Many of the people we surveyed commented that they were happy with public transport in the local area, particularly freedom pass holders. However quite a few people mentioned the lack of disabled access at Harrow on the Hill station and several people felt that public transport in London was too expensive. Specific feedback on the New Bus for London included the fact that people felt that the ceiling was too low upstairs, the seats at the back of the bus were too high, there was not enough buggy space and the fact that buses are packed after school.