

---

## Minutes

Agenda item : 4  
Final Draft : 5.10.10

---

**Minutes of a meeting of the Access to Transport Committee  
held on 23 June 2010 at 6 Middle Street, London EC1**

### Contents

- 1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements**
- 2 Apologies for absence**
- 3 Declarations of interest**
- 4 Blister paving**
- 5 Minutes**
- 6 Matters arising (AT018)**
- 7 Actions taken (AT019)**
- 8 Update on the work being undertaken by London TravelWatch in the following areas :**
  - a) Access to healthcare facilities (AT020)**
  - b) London TravelWatch's work on accessible bus stops (AT021)**
  - c) Step-free stations update (AT022)**
  - d) Taxi safety update (AT023)**
  - e) St Pancras to King's Cross walking route update (AT024)**
  - f) Countdown 2 (AT025)**
  - g) Interchange visit report (AT026)**
- 9 Any other business**
- 10 Resolution to move into confidential session**
- 11 Glossary**

### Present

#### Members

Gail Engert (Chair), Sophia Lambert, Lorna Reith, Kevin Davis and Sharon Grant (London TravelWatch Chair)

#### Guests

Moira Fraser                      Royal National Institute for the Blind (RNIB)  
Elizabeth Hargest

#### Staff

Committee Administrator; Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer

### Minutes

#### **1 Chair's introduction and pre-meeting announcements**

The Chair welcomed members, guests and the public and made the standard housekeeping announcements.

## **2 Apologies for absence**

Apologies were received from Sarah Pond, Onjali Rauf and Janet Cooke.

## **3 Declarations of interest**

No additional declarations of interest were made.

## **4 Blister paving**

The Chair welcomed Ms Fraser to the meeting. Her presentation may be viewed in full at : <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/document/4252/get>

Mrs Hargest, a blind person, was in attendance to give a user's perspective.

Ms Fraser began by explaining that there were a lot of different interested parties in tactile paving, for example, blind and partially-sighted people, wheelchair users and arthritis sufferers. There are approximately a million blind and partially-sighted people in the UK, and a further million with significant sight loss. Approximately 5 per cent of blind and partially-sighted people had no sight at all.

Mobility and independence issues are of key importance to blind and partially-sighted people. Tactile paving is a key way of promoting independence and safety for blind and partially-sighted people. There are two types of paving: blister (bumpy) paving usually at crossings and allows someone to identify the edge of the pavement where there is a dropped curve; or corduroy paving which is a long unbroken line usually at the tops of steps and platform edges (alerts the blind or partially-sighted person to a hazard and proceed with caution).

Ms Fraser noted that the guidelines state that the paving should be red at controlled crossings or buff at uncontrolled crossings. As most blind or partially-sighted people have some useful vision, colour contrast is helpful in identifying the location and type of crossing. Grey is difficult to differentiate from surrounding pavement.

She went on to highlight some of the problems with tactile paving :

- Poorly installed and maintained
- Painful on feet
- Broken by cars
- Difficult for wheelchair users or other mobility aids
- Slippery in ice or when wet
- Confusing if different standards are used.

A member asked whether the use of tactile paving was a compromise? Ms Fraser replied that it was. She recognised that not all disabled people like it or pedestrians who wore high heels.

Had enough work been done on a compromise? Those with balance difficulties, arthritis or wheelchair users found blister paving problematic. In practice the paving was poorly maintained. Were there other options? Ms Fraser replied that corduroy paving was more difficult. Tactile paving is read by those with sight impairment in the same way as a sign. The Department for Transport

(DfT) guidance had no better solution. A member noted that the red blister paving was tarnished easily.

It was noted that a significant problem was the failure of local authorities to install it consistently. Mrs Hargest noted that sighted and disabled people could get help by making eye contact. Blind or partially-sighted people found this difficult. For a blind person the only thing you are aware of is what's under your feet. Tactile paving is a guide and helps mobility. Ms Fraser noted the difficulties in having different policies in different places. This made some areas less accessible.

A member asked why London Underground used both types of tactile paving. The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer would investigate.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

The Chair noted that it appeared not to be consistent between countries or within the European Union (EU).

The Chair of London TravelWatch asked whether there was any research on pedestrian behaviour at crossings with tactile paving. She highlighted the stretch of pavement near London Bridge down to City Hall. This route used a patchwork of different types of tactile paving and was uneven. Ms Fraser replied that she was not aware of any research on pedestrian behaviour. If there was no tactile paving you would isolate people. She highlighted working with authorities in conservation areas where it was not desirable to have it in different colours.

It was agreed to invite someone from a charity such as Arthritis Care, which represents those that have difficulty with blister paving, and the DfT about this issue.

**Action : Committee Services**

Ms Fraser noted that the major problem was a lack of enforcement by the DfT on the standards for blister paving and Boroughs not having a universal approach. Mrs Hargest explained that blister paving is used for orientation by blind or partially-sighted people.

## **5 Minutes**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3 February 2010 were agreed and signed for the record.

## **6 Matters arising (AT018)**

Members asked whether there was an internal procedure to chase up outstanding matters arising. Transport for London (TfL) confirmed that regular meetings took place with London TravelWatch staff.

The Committee Administrator noted that a response had been received from London Overground (16.9.09, minute 6) to determine the additional cost of air conditioning and energy consumption on i) LOROL (London Overground).

Members asked for the matters arising paper to be reformatted so that the matter arising and completed response were on the same page.

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer would check with the Senior Policy Officer what the outcome was in relation to the colour of the priority seating on the new sub-surface London Underground rolling stock.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

## 7 Actions taken (AT019)

The paper was noted.

The Chair reported that she, the Chair of London TravelWatch, a member and the Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer had attended the scrutiny of the London Assembly Transport Committee on accessible transport.

The Chair also noted the new countdown traffic light trial had begun on 21 June 2010. The first system has been installed at Palestra. Transport for London confirmed that the light gave pedestrians an additional twelve seconds in addition to the green crossing time.

## 8 Update on the work being undertaken by London TravelWatch in the following areas

### a) Access to healthcare facilities (AT020)

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that he had attended meetings on the reconfigurations of health services in South East and North East London and had added value to the process. The health service had not considered transport needs during the reconfigurations. The South East London reconfiguration board had written to the London strategic authority that the NHS could do better on transport planning. He felt that Primary Care Trusts (PCTs), the commissioning bodies for health care, should insist on good travel plans. Northwick Park had employed an ex-local authority person to write their travel plan. He is keeping a watching brief on this area.

A member suggested arranging a meeting with the new Health and Transport ministers..

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

### b) London TravelWatch's work on accessible bus stops (AT021)

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that since the last meeting of the committee he had been working with Waltham Forest Borough on the abandonment of fixed route stops on a section of their road network. He noted that throughout London just over 50% of bus stops were accessible. He understood that Transport for London had reduced the target for bus stop accessibility. It was agreed to write to Boroughs (lead members) highlighting the number of accessible bus stops in their Borough.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

### c) Step-free stations update (AT022)

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that most deferred step-free stations were not likely to be progressed, apart from Finsbury Park and possibly Vauxhall.

It was agreed to come up with examples of where accessibility had been improved, but where the stations were not fully accessible as 'partial' accessibility was also important.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

### d) Taxi safety update (AT023)

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that London TravelWatch had met with the Public Carriage Office (PCO) following concerns relating to the Worboy's case. TfL

had now appointed a full-time officer to liaise with the Metropolitan Police. A stricter regime for medicals (at least every 9 years) would be introduced for cab drivers. However, whilst Identity cards would, in future, be on display, there would be no poster on how to complain in the taxi. He had raised this last issue with the Managing Director, Surface Transport.

The London TravelWatch Chair felt that the medicals were not strict enough and mental health issues had not been addressed. She asked for the list of issues to be revisited.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

A member asked whether the PCO could look into giving passengers a printed receipt with the driver's ID number at the end of the journey.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

e) St Pancras to King's Cross walking route update (AT024)

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer noted that Camden Borough had received £40,000 (via their Local Implementation Plan (LIP) funding) to carry out the necessary improvements. The target was to have the improvements completed by the start of the Olympics in 2012. There was a further opportunity to gain funding with a further development near the British Library.

f) Countdown 2 (AT025)

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that the criteria for selecting Countdown seemed reasonable, for example, high footfall, local generator of travel or interest nearby, etc. The rationale is acceptable.

Members asked for more information on the technology that announced the bus service to a blind person before they boarded a service.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

g) Interchange visit report (AT026)

The Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer reported that members and staff had gone on a visit to Walthamstow Central and Lewisham. He would raise the problems regarding the need for a controlled crossing at Lewisham station (3.7) further.

**Action : Streets and Surface Transport Policy Officer**

## **9 Any other business**

None.

## **10 Resolution to move into confidential session**

It was resolved, under section 15 (2)(b) of schedule 18 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999, that by reason of the confidential nature of the item(s) to be discussed, it was desirable in the public interest that the public should be excluded for the remainder of the meeting.

In the confidential session, members approved the minutes for the confidential session of the Committee meeting held on 3 February 2010 and reviewed the meeting.

The next meeting of the Committee would be held on 13 October 2010.

## 11 Glossary

DfT	Department for Transport
EU	European Union
TfL	Transport for London
LIP	Local Implementation Plan
LOROL	London Overground
PCO	Public Carriage Office
PCTs	Primary Care Trusts
RNIB	Royal National Institute for the Blind