

Board meeting

15 June 2021

LONDON
TRAVELWATCH

Impact of our influencing activity March – May 2021

Agenda item: 8
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1. Introduction

This report outlines the impact we have made through our influencing activity; in the media, through social media and our website and at meetings we have attended between March and May 2021

We made an impact in a number of areas including persuading TfL to lower the Oyster Auto Top up limit and seeing many of our Mayoral asks reflected in the main Mayoral candidates' websites.

2. Our communications work

This section is split between impacts and outputs and includes an attribution rating for the impacts which makes it clear how much influence we actually had in the achievement. This uses a scale of 1-5 (where 1 is 'contributed' and 5 is 'made it happen').

Impact this quarter

2.1 TfL commits to lowering the Oyster Auto Top up limit

What was the issue?

During the pandemic when many people are struggling financially and many of those who are travelling are making far fewer journeys, the Oyster Auto Top up limit of £20 is a large amount of money to have tied up on an Oyster card.

What did we do?

Having exchanged a couple of letters on the issue with the Transport Commissioner, Andy Byford to make the case for lowering the limit, we met with

TfL's fares team to discuss the issue. We also wrote to all London MPs asking for their support on the issue. Virendra Sharma, Labour MP for Ealing Southall wrote a letter of support to Andy Byford while the issue was the subject of a Mayoral question from Keith Prince.

What was the outcome?

As a result of our pressure, TfL have committed to reduce the Auto Top Up limit to £10. But disappointingly the change is likely to be introduced in January 2022 subject to TfL's resources.

Attribution rating: 4

Outputs

2.2 Mayoral manifestos include several of our asks

What was the issue?

We wanted to influence the main Mayoral candidates ahead of the Mayoral elections on behalf of transport users in London.

What did we do?

We had meetings with three of the four main candidates to discuss our key asks for the Mayor of London; the need for a London bus strategy; keeping cash payments at all London stations; consulting, engaging and listening to disabled people for every proposed TfL scheme and keeping bus fares as low as possible.

What was the outcome?

Several of our [Mayoral asks](#) influenced the manifestos of the main election candidates. The main candidates all mentioned prioritising the bus and improving bus services in outer London. Several also pledged to continue the Rail to Refuge scheme, a joint initiative from the Rail Delivery Group and Women's Aid which gives those fleeing domestic abuse free travel. This is particularly welcome at the moment with the heightened focus on personal security. We were also pleased to see pledges to keep bus fares low and protect concessions for younger and older people.

2.3 Award for campaign we started to save free bus travel for under 18s in London

What was the issue?

Under 18s faced losing their free Oyster Zip card travel on public transport as one of the terms of the funding agreement agreed between TfL and the Government in May 2020.

What did we do?

We met with groups of young Londoners and published a report on their concerns, which included fears about the financial cost, threats to independence and safety concerns. We also worked behind the scenes to help raise the profile of the issue, pulling together an alliance, which included the Child Poverty Action Group, London Councils and Partnership for Young London, which was ultimately successful.

What was the output?

We were really pleased to see that the campaign has been recognised with an award at the Sheila McKechnie Foundation annual awards this year. By sounding the alarm and pulling together an alliance, we helped to get the issue on the agenda. Our research based on interviews with young people was highly praised by Assembly Members, the Mayor and MPs and played a key part in the campaign's success.

2.4 Finding out what transport users need from London's transport network in the future

What was the issue?

We wanted to find out what the future of transport in London might look like and get an understanding of what people need when it comes to transport in London as things start to get back to normal.

What did we do?

We gathered evidence from a survey of transport users and interviews with representative organisations, politicians, business organisations and the transport industry to get their view on how the future might look and an understanding of what people need when it comes to transport in London as things start to get back to normal.

What was the output?

We held a successful future transport webinar on 4 March and shared video contributions from politicians and key stakeholders on social media over the following week. The live webinar audience peaked at 120 and since then a further 470 people have watched [the recording on YouTube](#). Our report, The

Journey Ahead has been well received by Mayoral candidates and TfL and has been downloaded over 500 times. Our short videos of the key external contributors on social media were also well received with over 1,000 views on social media.

3. Other media coverage

We continued to receive some good coverage in the press despite the fact that much of this period fell during the pre-election period where we reduced our public communications.

Emma did an interview on LBC Radio (which has almost 700,000 weekly listeners) discussing TfL's decision to increase bus capacity from 17 May and a further one following TfL's new funding deal agreed on 1 June. She also did two interviews with Bloomberg Radio; about priorities for the new Mayoral term and the Williams Rail Review.

We were mentioned in an article in the Evening Standard (daily print circulation of 860,000, a daily readership of 1.6m and 600,000 unique daily visitors to its website) in March warning about service cuts.

In addition, we received a wide range of coverage in the local press.

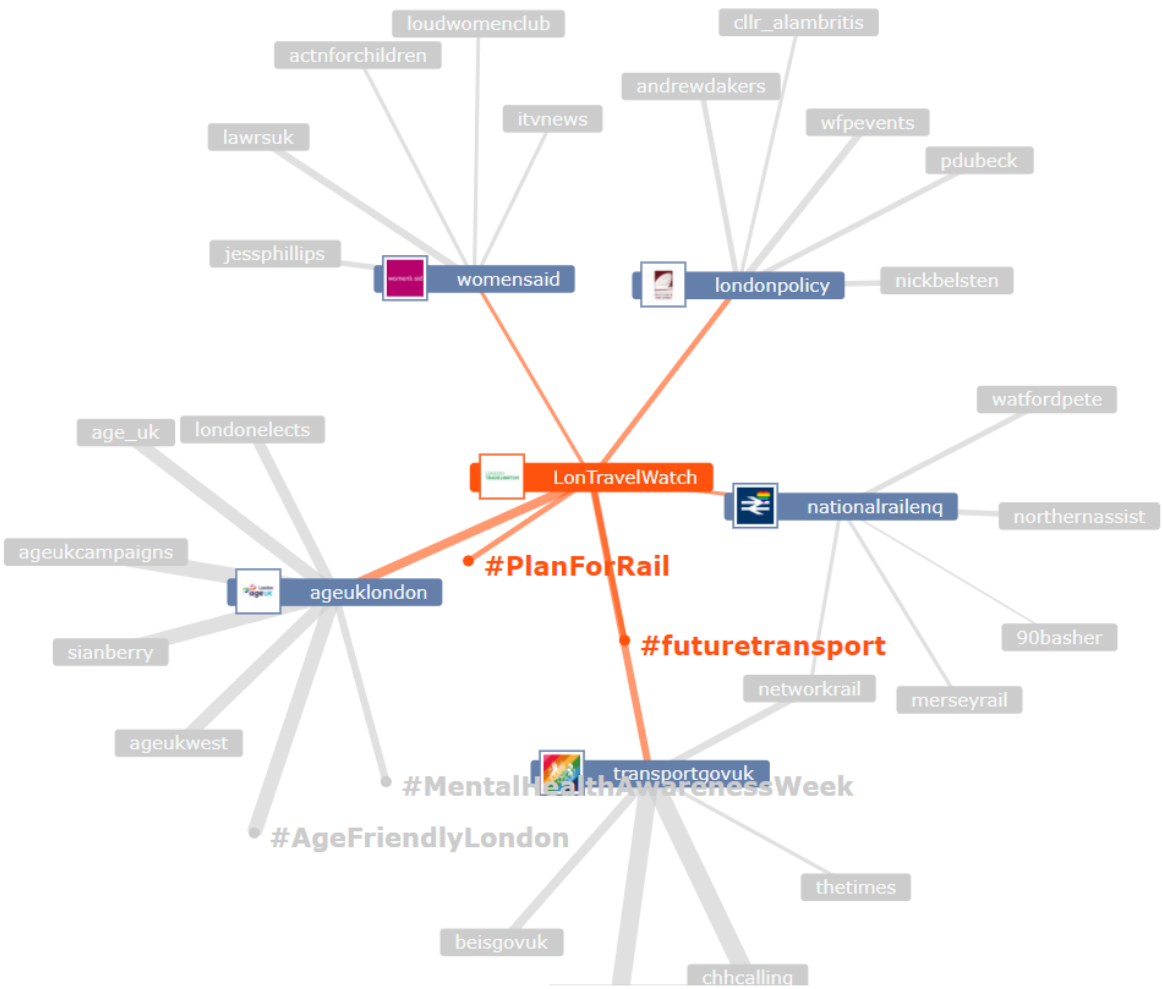
Our work reviewing apps was picked up by the BBC website (which has an average of 4.3m views a day).

A full list of our media coverage between March and May is appended to this report.

4. Website and social media

Website and social media statistics are included in the confidential part of this agenda.

The 'mention map' below shows the people who have connected with us on Twitter during the past three months, their connections and popular associated hashtags. It shows the diverse connections you can make on Twitter and the potential to reach a wider audience through prolific tweeters with a broad range of followers.



5. Recommendation

Members are recommended to note this report.

Richard Freeston-Clough, June 2021

Appendix – Press mentions/media appearances from March to May 2021

TfL staff have stopped 137,000 passengers who refused to wear masks – 3 March 2021

South London Press

<https://londonnewsonline.co.uk/tfl-staff-have-stopped-137000-passengers-who-refused-to-wear-masks/>

No more 'mega projects' and we may not have enough money to finish Crossrail, admits TfL chief – 17 March 2021

The Evening Standard

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/mayor/tfl-mega-projects-finish-crossrail-2-bakerloo-line-extension-b924630.html>

TfL admits London Underground projects put on hold amid 'big risk' Crossrail may not be finished – 17 March 2021

My London

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/tfl-admits-london-underground-projects-20199323>

Sadiq Khan says don't rule out cashless Tube stations – 18 March 2021

East London and West Essex Guardian

<https://www.guardian-series.co.uk/news/19170775.sadiq-khan-says-dont-rule-cashless-tube-stations/>

London Underground stations could permanently stop accepting cash – 19 March 2021

My London

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/zone-1-news/london-underground-stations-could-permanently-20211573>

Cashless Tube stations still on the table, says Mayor – 19 March 2021

City Matters

<https://www.citymatters.london/cashless-tube-stations-still-on-the-table-says-mayor/>

Becontree Estate centenary, the census, safe travel and ovarian cancer – 21 March 2021

Barking and Dagenham Post

<https://www.barkinganddagenhampost.co.uk/news/becontree-estate-census-safe-travel-and-ovarian-cancer-7829300>

Letters: Elm Park, police foot patrols, Hilldene toilets and a KGH meeting – 21 March 2021

Romford Recorder

<https://www.romfordrecorder.co.uk/news/letters-on-elm-park-and-king-george-hospital-7835052>

'There's two trains an hour. It's not good for business': The potentially huge impact of shelving Crossrail 2 – 23 March 2021

My London

<https://www.mylondon.news/news/west-london-news/theres-two-trains-hour-its-20240264>

The London Press

<https://thelondonpress.uk/2021/03/23/theres-two-trains-an-hour-its-not-good-for-business-the-potentially-huge-impact-of-shelving-crossrail-2/>

Join Transport Focus and London TravelWatch at our online event as we explore the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on accessible transport – 11 April 2021

Rail Professional

<https://www.railpro.co.uk/news/accessible-transport-unlocking-a-better-normal>

Rail firms to launch flexible season tickets to lure commuters back to city centres – 16 April 2021

City A.M.

<https://www.cityam.com/rail-firms-launch-flexible-season-tickets-to-lure-commuters-back-to-city-centres/>

London Overground lines to be renamed as Sadiq Khan expands plans to reflect capital's historic diversity – 16 April 2021

The Evening Standard

<https://www.standard.co.uk/news/mayor/london-overground-renamed-sadiq-khan-diversity-b930046.html>

Are Low Traffic Neighbourhoods the latest casualty of the culture wars? – 26 April 2021

Air Quality News

<https://airqualitynews.com/2021/04/26/are-low-traffic-neighbourhoods-the-latest-casualty-of-the-culture-wars/>

Britain's Political Landscape Shifts – 10 May 2021

Bloomberg

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/audio/2021-05-10/britain-s-political-landscape-shifts>

TfL Go: London travel app outperformed by Google Maps – 13 May 2021

BBC

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-london-57089129>

Don't Zap the Zip – 16 May 2021

Sheila McKechnie Foundation

https://smk.org.uk/awards_nominations/dontzapthezip/

U.K. Revamps Its Railway (Audio) – 20 May 2021

Bloomberg

<https://www.bloomberg.com/news/audio/2021-05-20/u-k-revamps-its-railway-audio>