

# LONDON TRAVELWATCH

## Business Plan 2022-2023

### Introduction

It's been a turbulent year for transport services in London and we can expect more uncertainty over the coming year too.

At the moment there is uncertainty over whether our current pandemic is over, or whether it will be extended through new Covid variants. So in turn, when Londoners will resume their usual journeys, and what people's new work and travel patterns will be, is still unknown to us all.

Rail companies for example brought in new timetables in early September which they say reflect people's changing travel patterns, but we'll need to make sure that the assumptions behind those changes are monitored, and that timetable changes reflect any new changes to travel behaviour. Similarly, the rail industry's decision to make widespread redundancies will need to be monitored closely for its impact on passengers.



Layered on top of that, uncertainty over TfL's finances and downward funding pressure could force them to make some tough choices about where they spend their money. And this could include a reduction in services, especially the bus.

A fully decarbonised transport system is also good for the climate, so there may be opportunities for London TravelWatch to ask transport authorities to prioritise lower carbon transport solutions, that also benefit transport users.

So with this picture in mind, we propose that in the coming year, 50% of our research and advocacy work is focused on proactive projects, with the remaining 50% deployed on reactive work to further meet the needs of London's transport users.

## **What we've achieved in 2021**

Before we look at what our plans are for 2022, it's worth a look at what we've achieved in 2021.

### **Campaign and Advocacy successes**

- Had several of our Mayoral Asks taken up by leading candidates and included in their manifestos including commitments to prioritise the bus and improve bus services in outer London, and keep bus fares low
- Persuaded TfL to drop their plan to make all stations in London cashless
- Persuaded TfL to commit to lowering the Oyster Auto Top Up limit from £20 to £10
- Persuaded TfL to improve the information on their website, journey planner and TfL Go app about travel during the pandemic, with information to help passengers avoid busy stations and services
- Brought TfL and the rail industry together to improve co-operation on data sharing, which has led to better information being given to transport users about the busyness of services

### **Public Engagement**

- Over 1,000 people took part in our survey about personal security when travelling
- Over 500 people viewed our Future Transport webinar either live or on our YouTube channel afterwards. The report has been downloaded over 500 times. Our short videos of the key contributions from politicians and key stakeholders on social media were also well received with over 1,000 views on social media.
- Held a successful personal security webinar in July which had over 260 views either live or on our YouTube channel afterwards. People attended from the Metropolitan Police, BTP, TfL's policing team and the Department for Transport.

### **Casework**

- Overhauled and modernised our complaints handling system so that our casework team could prioritise the most important appeals and improve the number of successful outcomes achieved on behalf of individual complainants.
- An audit conducted by the Government's Internal Audit Agency, on behalf of Transport Focus concluded that London TravelWatch were delivering a very good appeals service to passengers and that Transport Focus and London TravelWatch were effectively pooling their resources, for example by sharing industry contacts to deliver quality outcomes for customers.

## Stakeholder relationships

- In our annual satisfaction survey of Assembly Members and their staff 100% of respondents said they were either satisfied or very satisfied with the work of London TravelWatch, which is an improvement on last year's result.
- Being able to use the London cut of Transport Focus' omnibus data each week has helped us to advocate better for transport users.



## Proposed projects for 2022

### 1. Keeping London Working



In the last year London TravelWatch has focused on making it easier for those who have to travel, to have a reliable and safe service. This has included putting pressure on TfL and train companies to provide better customer information about how busy services will be; setting up an Alliance to argue against service reductions; publishing research which made the case for the Mayor to mandate the wearing of face coverings on public transport, and persuading the Mayor to keep bus fares as low as possible, for the key workers who rely on them. We've also

published research which shows what transport authorities need to do to improve people's sense of personal security when travelling.

We anticipate that all of these issues will still be live over the coming year and that London TravelWatch, in partnership with organisations also working to protect services for transport users, will need to continue to research and lobby for their needs.

London TravelWatch can play a lead role in the debate about post-Covid and climate-related behaviour change in transport in London by using insights from transport users to provide a firm evidence base.

London TravelWatch also has a role to play in making the arguments for a more integrated transport transformation, for example by showing how the needs of people walking, cycling or using the bus can both compliment and reinforce each other.

## 2. Fund and Prioritise the Bus

We've recently launched a Bus Alliance, which includes groups such as London First; Sustrans; Campaign for Better Transport; Unite; RoadPeace; Transport for All; and London Assembly Members Caroline Pidgeon, Keith Prince, Sian Berry and Elly Baker. The list of Alliance members continues to grow and interest in the future of the bus is evident.



The Alliance has two aims: to argue for fair funding for London's buses in the next Government funding deal with TfL; and to create more priority for buses on London's roads.

Our intention is to carry on with this project over the next business year. As well as growing the Bus Alliance, the aims of the project are to: help ensure delivery of the Mayor's manifesto commitment to prioritise the bus on our roads; raise the profile of bus priority with councils, in order to increase borough level commitment to bus priority measures; continue to put pressure on and support TfL to bring in new bus priority measures; and broker better collaboration between TfL and the Boroughs in prioritising the bus.

We've made good progress influencing TfL and they will shortly be unveiling their new 'Bus Action Plan'. Going forward, we'll need to expand our focus to better engage the Boroughs. One of the ways that we're doing this is by partnering with the Healthy Streets Scorecard Coalition, to help them devise a bus priority measure on their 2022 Borough scorecard for the first time.

We'll also be producing research which shows how much money TfL could save by reducing average bus journey times, and we'll be using this research in our influencing work.

### **3. Rail Reform: the right deal for London**

With the establishment of Great British Railways on the horizon, and the re-organisation of the rail industry to prepare for this change, there will be opportunities for London TravelWatch, in conjunction with our sister organisation Transport Focus, to make sure that the passenger voice is heard during this once-in a-generation change. And 2022 will be a key year for influencing the shape of the transformation.



In the near-term, making sure that timetable changes serve passenger needs is the key priority. So we're scoping out a research project aimed at finding out what London rail passengers need in terms of train frequency and access to ticket offices. This research will put us in a stronger position to advocate for passenger needs over the coming year.

#### 4. Personal Security



In 2021 we did a research project on how secure people felt when travelling around London, with an emphasis on how people who feel more vulnerable about their security experience our transport system. Using our research we've lobbied TfL, the BTP, Met Police and the rail industry to implement our recommendations.

And with the safety of women being high on the political and media agenda, we intend to continue with our lobbying into 2022, with a particular focus on travelling at night.

#### 5. Statutory Duties

London TravelWatch is expecting an increase in the amount of time it spends on statutory duties like conducting passenger consultations. As funding for public transport comes under pressure, we expect to see train companies proposing more ticket office closures or reductions in their opening hours, for example. And this could result in us dealing with several thousand responses from the public each time.

#### 6. Accessibility



London TravelWatch proposes to continue its successful partnership with Transport for All, and to work with organisations representing disabled people such as Age UK London, RNIB and Guide Dogs. Current projects and concerns include: continuing to broker better cooperation between TfL and the rail industry to provide a seamless flow of passenger information about when lifts and escalators are out of order; the impact of the e-scooter trials on disabled people; and better consultation with disabled people in new and current Streetspace

schemes. London TravelWatch sits on TfL's new Healthy Streets Advisory Group, where we offer a critical voice in support of more accessible streets.

We will continue to work on emerging or historic accessibility concerns, as new opportunities come up throughout the year.

## **7. Safety**

We have reviewed our safety work, to make sure that all of our work in this area is effective, benefits transport users and offers the best value for money.

Clearly many safety issues are highly technical and complex and we must be realistic about our level of expertise and the resource we have available. But we propose to put more emphasis on developing relationships with organisations that focus on safety issues such as rail safety bodies, the Parliamentary Advisory Committee on Transport Safety (PACTS) and with road safety organisations including BRAKE and RoadPeace, to understand key safety issues. However, we will avoid duplicating other work that is already underway, and limit ourselves to adding our multi-modal knowledge into discussions and advocacy on behalf of users.

For instance, there are many issues relating to road safety, especially related to cycling, but specialist cycling organisations generally take the lead on these issues. However, as the debate around the introduction of e-scooters intensifies, there may be a need to take an interest in this issue.

## **8. Alliances and Partnerships**

London TravelWatch has set up several alliances and partnerships in the last year, including:

- Creating a multi-group alliance to oppose TfL's plans to go cashless, which included organisations like Which?, Women's Aid and Just Fair
- Partnering with the Young Women's Trust and Girl's Friendly Society in our personal security research
- Setting up a broad alliance to support fair and adequate funding for London's transport system, which includes organisations like London First; Sustrans; Age UK London; Friends of the Earth; Greenpeace; Unite; Mums4Lungs; Campaign for Better Transport; Clean Cities Campaign, Possible and Transport for All

Our plan is to continue to grow and diversify the number of organisations that we work with, in order to extend our reach and effectiveness.

## **Measurable Objectives for 2022**

### Campaigning and Advocacy

- Increase Borough level commitment to bus priority measures
- Key LTW recommendations on improving personal security are implemented by police, transport authorities or transport operators
- Produce evidence which shows the passenger point of view in relation to changes to transport services, including the proposed reforms to the railways.
- Continue to grow and improve the diversity of our digital community so that it is made up of 40% women; 7% 18-25s; and 20% ethnic minority Londoners by the end of the period
- Increase the use of video in social media posts and build relationships with organisations who can share our posts, to increase our reach
- Persuade TfL and the rail industry to complete their project to provide information to passengers about when lifts and escalators are out of order

### Organisational Development

- Implement the recently agreed Diversity and Inclusion Strategy
- Create a culture where staff feel comfortable talking about mental health issues.

### Casework

- Create a new complaints webpage to help passengers resolve certain types of complaint without having to appeal through the LTW casework team

### Relationships

- Build alliances or partnerships with at least five organisations who we haven't yet worked closely with
- Collaborate effectively with Transport Focus to incorporate the passenger voice into the rail reform process
- Become more influential with TfL's new Director of Buses to help improve bus priority on TfL and borough roads

## **Budget for 2022-23**

We are anticipating a further budget reduction of 2% in 2022-23 which will leave us with an operating budget of £1,067,000. But this figure is still subject to agreement from the Oversight and Transport Committees. The majority of our costs (67%) are for staff that we employ and fixed overheads (16%) which include rent for offices and IT infrastructure costs. The shortfall in funding in the year will be funded by reducing the budget we have available for projects and campaigns.



**London TravelWatch**  
**BUDGET SUBMISSION 2022-23**

£'s	Budget		Notes
	2022-23	2021-22	
<b>Grant in Aid Funding</b>			
Core	1,067,000	1,089,000	
<b>Total funding</b>	<b>1,067,000</b>	<b>1,089,000</b>	Assumed 2% budget reduction in 2022-23
<b>Expenditure</b>			
Fixed Pay	719,000	690,000	
Fixed Overheads	172,000	182,000	
Variable Overheads	176,000	217,000	Reduction to project and campaign reserves budget
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>1,067,000</b>	<b>1,089,000</b>	
<b>Net surplus / (deficit)</b>	-	-	