

Board Meeting  
21.03.23

LONDON  
TRAVELWATCH

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## **Campaigns & Advocacy Report**

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Agenda item: LTW705

Drafted: 9 March 2023

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### **Increase Borough level commitment to bus priority measures**

We're continuing the next phase of our bus campaign, narrowing down the key Boroughs we want to engage this. To help shape this we have been meeting with organisations including London Councils, TfL and the Bus Alliance, getting input on where to focus our efforts. Our next step is to build and strengthen relationships with these target boroughs.

We're also continuing efforts to protect, maintain and where possible extend bus services. This will consist of a mix of reactive and proactive work to build support for the bus services. As part of this we are looking at the expansion of ULEZ in summer 2023. While the Mayor has said this will be accompanied by an extra one million kilometres added to the bus network, with the aim of helping Londoners to adapt to the expanded ULEZ, we're concerned most of these will not be in place by the time the scheme expands.

We'll be engaging with Outer London Boroughs and TfL to make sure these are added to the right locations and rolled out as a priority, with proper consultation with the people affected. An extra 400,000 bus kilometres have been announced so far. We are responding to these consultations, and are exploring some public communications to both encourage people to respond and to pressure on TfL to increase bus services in Outer London Boroughs

### **Key LTW recommendations on improving personal security are implemented by police, transport authorities or transport operators**

We are continuing to build on our initial personal security research, and are in the process of collecting data from transport operators and police authorities to input into a 'scorecard' measuring their progress against our recommendations. As part of this TfL have written us a letter outlining the work they are doing on personal security, indicating they continue to take action to implement our recommendations. We also met the British Transport Police to discuss their work on individual safety, including their Railway guardian app and how it was working.

We have also commissioned Galop, the UK's LGBT+ anti-abuse charity, to conduct new research into how LGBTQ+ Londoners experience the transport network. This will form part of a series of work following on from the original research.

As part of the work to criminalise Public Sexual Harassment (PSH), one of the recommendations in our personal security report, we are working in partnership with a group of organisations led by Plan International UK to influence the [Protection from Sex-based Harassment in Public Bill](#). Most recently we have signed an open letter to Sarah Dines, Minister for Safeguarding, calling for amendments to strengthen the legislation.

### **Produce evidence which shows the passenger point of view in relation to changes to transport services, including the proposed reforms to the railways**

There have been no further updates on timings for planned consultations on potential ticket office closures, which could affect up to 300 station ticket offices in the London area. However, the Department for Transport has published long-awaited guidance about the process, referencing the statutory role of London TravelWatch and Transport Focus. We also recently attended a session with the Rail Delivery Group and train operating companies to understand and comment on their station modernisation and workforce reform programme.

We've continued to advocate for passengers impacted by the changes to Southeastern's timetable, which came into effect in December 2022. Southeastern invited us to meet in February to discuss how the new timetable was working so far, and we received a commitment from them to make changes to the timetable as needed. We are pleased that they have since announced the new May 2023 timetable will reinstate some trains that had been removed, amounting to more than 300 extra services a week.

London TravelWatch will continue to push for further changes as needed, and are undertaking research with Transport Focus to find out from their passengers what their experiences of the new timetable are to help inform this. We'll also use this in engagement with DfT, to highlight to them the importance of train operators consulting on significant changes.

We have spoken with Network Rail and Southeastern about the serious crowding issues that have occurred at London Bridge Station in the last couple of months. They are undertaking a review into the situations, and have said they will share learnings and actions they are taking to prevent future incidents. However, we will continue to monitor this and push for further action if needed given the safety issues involved.

Ahead of the introduction of another new train timetable (from Sunday 21 May) we met the team at Govia Thameslink Railway. They presented the proposed changes, and we will respond with recommendations around communications and stakeholder engagement.

### **Any other updates**

- We'll be publishing our research on digital exclusion in London's transport network on 15 March. This will include a launch event with stakeholders from across industry, government and other passenger organisations. This will be accompanied by media and stakeholder communications.
- We continue responding to bus, tube and rail strike activity, including providing feedback to TfL and TOCs on how these are handled and their communications to passengers. We have seen considerable improvements over the past year, and they continue to implement our suggestions.
- We submitted written evidence to the House of Commons Treasury Select Committee's inquiry into Minimum Service Levels for Rail. We emphasised that any plans must work for passengers, meeting accessibility requirements, being reliable, and including consultation with the passenger groups.
- We gave feedback to the ORR on a proposal by some TOCs to change how they provide physical leaflets to passengers who need them. We expressed our concerns that these changes would create more barriers for passengers looking for information, with a particular impact on Disabled people, and prioritises the convenience and budgets of TOCs over passenger needs.
- The Mayor's new scrappage scheme, aimed at helping Londoners scrap non-compliant cars ahead of the expansion of ULEZ, has been launched. We've been asking TfL to make sure eligible Londoners are aware of the scheme and get the support they need to apply.
- We've continued to engage with the Travel Demand Management Forum for London. Topics have included disruption due to building works in preparation for HS2 and over Easter, a review of travel over the festive period including learnings for future, and initial plans for the King's coronation in May. Throughout we have emphasised the need for clear and timely communications to passengers.
- We met with Lime, who provide electric micromobility services in London, including e-scooter and e-bike rental. While we recognise their value to increasing active travel around the capital, we're concerned that people are leaving their bikes in inappropriate places. This is creating barriers in the street and making it harder for people to get around, with a particular impact on Disabled people. They are taking steps to address this, and said they will include us in upcoming consultations they are running on the subject.