

Campaigns & Advocacy Report

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Better transport services

Government consultations

The Government has launched a [consultation on rail reform proposals](#) to inform the forthcoming Railways Bill. This will include the formation of a new passenger watchdog, reform of fares and online retail of tickets, and working with devolved leads to manage the rail network. Michael and Tricia are leading on London TravelWatch's response to the proposals, engaging with key stakeholders and are looking at the details of the consultation to inform our response. This will be discussed as a separate item on the meeting agenda.

The Department for Transport (DfT) also ran a "Call for Ideas" following the announcement of a new Integrated National Transport Strategy. We submitted a written response to this, highlighting amongst other things the need to put the travelling public's needs at the heart of the strategy, with long-term funding and joined up working across regions and modes. I also attended a DfT workshop bringing together stakeholders from across London to discuss the proposed strategy, including what is needed to make sure the transport network meets the needs of the people who use it, and how it can be delivered.

Pain points

Our two current areas of focus are Euston station and the Central line. In the case of the former, Michael continues to participate in the Euston Oversight Group led by Network Rail and his Chief Executive's report includes an update on the recent work of the group.

On the Central line, after over a year of significant disruption TfL have now reinstated the full weekday timetable of 71 trains (compared to the 60-train temporary timetable), though the weekend timetable remains unchanged while they continue to repair faulty trains. Trevor wrote a blog to mark this and provide our thoughts on how TfL handled the issues, as well as looking ahead to future potential pain points, such as the Bakerloo line (which has the oldest fleet in daily passenger service in the UK).

Buses

We continue to engage with TfL on the recommendations in our 2024 report on improving London's buses. We have also been furthering this work with the Bus Alliance, looking at how to build pressure on TfL to make sure decisive and effective

action is taken to reduce bus journey times. Other topics discussed with the group include access to buses for wheelchair users, Superloop and bus frequency.

Value for Money

We commissioned Oxera to conduct a review of value for money on London transport to help build our understanding of the topic and the situation for passengers, with a particular interest in lower income Londoners. This consists of a review of existing research and secondary data analysis. We will use this to inform the second phase of our work on value for money in 2025/26.

Oxera have since conducted the initial research and drafted an initial report, which we have provided feedback on. They are now undertaking more work to follow up on a number of points we raised in response to the first draft.

Oxford Street

The Mayor has launched a consultation to gather views on the principle of his proposal to pedestrianise Oxford Street and suggestions for how it could work best. The consultation does not include any detailed proposals for the pedestrianisation, which will be subject to further engagement and consultation. However, it does recognise that such a change would impact bus passengers, cyclists and users of taxis and private hire vehicles, and that any detailed proposals would aim to ensure that the area remains as accessible as possible.

When proposals to pedestrianise Oxford Street have previously been raised, the London TravelWatch position¹ has been one of no in-principle objection to improving the pedestrian environment, noting the benefits, but also emphasising that this needs to be balanced against the needs of bus passengers, who would be most adversely affected by pedestrianisation. As we review the proposal we anticipate this will be our position again, but would welcome views from the Board.

The consultation also asks for views on establishing a new Mayoral Development Corporation (MDC) to cover Oxford Street, which would set up a statutory body with the powers to deliver such a scheme. At this point we plan to focus our response on the proposed pedestrianization instead of the MDC, but again would welcome views from board members.

Accessibility and inclusion

We have completed our digital exclusion mystery shopping programme, including analysis. Key themes that have emerged include the importance of staff to passengers, price differences between PAYG and traditional tickets and inconsistency of information provision. We are planning to publish the findings the week commencing 17 March, with accompanying comms work planned.

¹ Including in our 2009 response to the GLA consultation on Traffic Congestion on Oxford Street, Regent Street and Bond Street, and in a November 2017 paper to the Board about TfL's Oxford Street bus changes associated with pedestrianisation

We continue to attend TfL's Inclusive Transport Forum, which provide an opportunity to discuss different projects TfL are undertaking to improve the inclusiveness of their network. In the most recent meeting topics included e-scooters, road safety campaigns and toilet feasibility studies. We also discussed how to improve the customer complaints process, with the casework team providing insight from their experiences with the system and the feedback we receive.

In our recent meeting with TfL discussing customer care, we have also gone into more depth regarding their progress on the Equity in Motion strategy. This includes how they've worked with Google to make Street View available in 36 key stations, research to improve the effectiveness of priority seating, increasing step-free access. Much of this work will continue into 2025/26. We'll continue to review progress with TfL going forward and providing feedback, including on their review of travel assistance.

We have been reviewing our work on personal security, including next steps following the joint summit we held with TfL at the end of last year. We propose focusing on the experience of people reporting (or not reporting) an incident, which continues to be highlighted as a real problem for people, to identify ways to improve the process. Alongside this we will push TfL and TOCs to implement other recommendations from both our research and the summit.

Alongside this we continue regular stakeholder engagement. This includes a meeting with TfL and Galop to discuss progress implementing the recommendations from our "Out in London" report on LGBTQ+ people's safety when travelling, and attending the Hate Crime Stakeholder Reference Group (convened by the Mayor's Office for Policing and Crime).

Improved LTW insight

We have reviewed our planned research into passenger priorities, proposing a new approach splitting the work into two strands: relative priorities for Londoners, and "deep dives" into specific areas to build insight. We propose the first of these look at street space and how it is used. More details are available in the [updated passenger priorities paper](#) (emailed to Board members on 7 March).

We also continue to support the Transport Committee, discussing potential topics they could explore in 2025/26. We are also feeding into their briefing on surface access at Heathrow Airport, which is the topic of their March 2025 meeting.

Other updates

- We continue to regularly meet TfL, with recent topics including revenue protection, real-time bus information, the [Travel in London 2024 report](#), Silvertown Tunnel, Superloop and consultations for the year ahead.
- We met the Rail Delivery Group, discussing rail reform and information provision during disruption.

- We continue to attend the Travel Demand Management Forum for London. Since the last Board meeting the group has reviewed closures over the festive period and travel on New Year's Eve, the Spring Midland Main Line closures and engineering works over the Easter holidays.
- I joined the Parliamentary Advisory Committee for Transport Safety's (PACTS) Rail Safety Working Party group meeting. The RSSB presented their work on anti-social behaviour, we spoke about the rail industry's approach to a Safe System, and the ORR provided an update on their review into the costs and benefits of health and safety interventions.
- We met the interim Managing Director of South Western Railway (SWR) as part of our regular engagement with train operators. We discussed their performance over recent months, their work to improve customer satisfaction and the renationalisation of SWR, which is due to take place in May.