



Annual review

2025-2026



About London TravelWatch

London TravelWatch is the capital's independent transport watchdog, working to make travelling in and around the capital better for everyone. We speak up for all those who use the bus, Underground and rail services in and around the city as well as users of Dial-a-Ride, trams, taxis, cable cars and river transport, and those who walk, wheel and cycle. Our remit also covers matters related to the capital's principal road network.

We campaign for improvements to the transport system and act as a voice for those who use public transport but whose views might not always be heard.

We also deal with appeals from people who are unhappy with the response from their transport provider to a complaint.

Our vision

A city where transport is reliable, safe, affordable and accessible for everyone

Our mission

To be the voice of the travelling public in championing measures to improve transport in London

Our values

Independent - We will act with integrity and authenticity, based on evidence and without political bias, always striving to make a positive difference

Fair - We are committed to fairness, equity and transparency in all that we do, and we strive to treat everyone equally and respectfully regardless of their background

Collaborative - We will actively listen, learn and engage with people who travel in London, transport providers, and the wider community to promote meaningful and sustainable outcomes that support our mission and vision

Responsive - We will adapt quickly, looking for creative and innovative ways to meet the changing needs of people who travel



Foreword

Tricia Hayes CB, Chair

I am very proud as Chair of London TravelWatch to introduce this review into our work in 2025/26. I do this on behalf of our whole Board – Susan, Priya, Tiffany, Eddie, Lara and Rick – and with my heartfelt thanks to them for all their support and leadership this year.



During this year London TravelWatch celebrated our 25th Anniversary – an important moment for us to reflect on everything we do and have done to support and champion the interest of London’s travelling public. As Michael Roberts, our fantastic Chief Executive, sets out below, we are confident that we have made a practical and tangible difference this year to some of the issues which people care about the most.

Our mission at TravelWatch is to build a deep understanding of the needs of people who travel in London and to work as a critical friend of the sector to give them a better deal. In London, the quality and reliability of all modes of transport is at the heart of our day-to-day life. It can make the difference between a good day and a terrible day for millions of people. We are here for everyone. I hope you enjoy reading about our work.



Michael Roberts, CEO

Our 25th year of activity since the Greater London Authority Act saw us continuing to make a difference.

Our support for medium-term Transport for London (TfL) funding and for the DLR extension to Thamesmead was reflected in welcome commitments from the Government, and in TfL’s plan to spend more renewing and maintaining its networks over the next four years.

We have actively contributed to the Mayoral Task Force looking at transport hate crime and violence against women and girls, and published research on what improvements Londoners say they need from their streets.

We have also held TfL to account on topics such as bus journey times, resilience of the Bakerloo line, and the provision of information during service disruption.

On national rail, there has been further progress to improve the customer experience at Euston station since our call for action, and a welcome extension of contactless ticketing to Stansted Airport.

In dealing with appeals from passengers dissatisfied with operators in our remit, we have achieved an improved or partially improved outcome in the majority of cases handled.

Visit our website for the [podcast series](#) launched during the year, highlighting some of the work of our team and stakeholders.

The year's highlights

Our team works hard to make a real difference to people who travel in and around the city. We do this through campaigning, research, media coverage and engaging with transport service providers. These are just some of the achievements we are most proud of from the past 12 months...

Investing for the future

Our concerns that more money was needed for TfL to effectively maintain and renew its network were acknowledged by the London Assembly, and we were pleased TfL has committed to increase levels of investment.

Making London safer

We joined the Mayor's Transport Hate Crime and VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) Taskforce to continue building on our work to make transport safer for everyone.

Holding TfL to account

We've been monitoring the operational resilience of the Bakerloo line, and continue to hold TfL to their assurances that they are investing in the fleet.

We also publicly called on TfL to do better in providing information to passengers during service disruption following a widespread power failure on the network.

Walking and wheeling

We published new research called Making Space, which looked at walking and wheeling in the capital and the issues people can face when trying to get around London on foot or with mobility aids.



Working for passengers

This year our casework team dealt with over 1,000 appeals and secured over £50,000 in refunds for passengers.

A better Euston

We continue to engage with Network Rail over improvements at Euston Station, and welcome the new longer boarding times, better customer communications and improved station facilities.

Talking Transport

Our new podcast gives a voice to different people who are involved in transport in the capital - and further afield.



Promoting solutions to tackle violence on the transport network

Personal security remains high on the list of concerns of Londoners when it comes to moving around the capital. We have played an active part on the Mayor's Transport Hate Crime and VAWG (Violence Against Women and Girls) Taskforce alongside other key organisations.

One of our important contributions to the Taskforce has been to commission research into the current reporting journey for people who have experienced or witnessed an incident, including what the pain points are and how it could be improved. We've worked closely with people with lived experience and stakeholders to inform this: the plan is to publish the research findings and recommendations once the work has been completed.

London TravelWatch's evidence and insight was used to inform the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee report into hate crime and violence against women and girls on London's public transport. The final report put forward a set of recommendations to improve the safety of people travelling, citing London TravelWatch research multiple times.

The Government has also now published guidance to bring the Protection from Sex-Based Harassment in Public Act 2023 into force. This law makes sexual harassment an offence, something we first called for in our report on personal security in 2022.

Supporting the case for investment



We welcomed TfL's success in securing a four-year capital funding settlement as part of the Government's 2025/26 Spending Review. The Government also used its Budget to confirm its support for extension of the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) to Thamesmead, although the detailed funding arrangements are still to be finalised. TfL, London TravelWatch and other organisations had called for a move away from annual settlements, and for the DLR extension to be given the go-ahead.

We were also pleased to see the commitment in TfL's latest business plan to increase the level of investment in maintaining and renewing assets such as tracks, trains and lifts on its network. We had highlighted this as an area of concern to the London Assembly Budget and Performance Committee, which it then picked up in its recommendations to the Mayor. The welcome increase is still short of what is needed to sustain a steady state level of investment and we will continue to monitor the impact of this on the performance of TfL services.

Identifying priorities for London's streets

Our research looked at ways that London's streets could be improved for walkers and wheelers, making street spaces more inclusive, pleasant and accessible for everyone.

In **Making Space**, we found that two thirds of Londoners walk or wheel regularly in the capital. But some people are dissatisfied with the conditions – mainly older people, parents with buggies and those with physical conditions.

We've since used this insight to advocate for positive changes to make street spaces more inclusive, pleasant and accessible for everyone. This includes through responses to the upcoming pedestrianisation of Oxford Street, and to support the London Assembly Transport Committee's investigation into the walkability of London's streets.

71%

say issues like overcrowding, pavement obstacles, lack of toilets and uneven pavements prevent them from walking or wheeling in London more often



38%

of people with physical or mental conditions say streets aren't accessible for those with disabilities or mobility issues

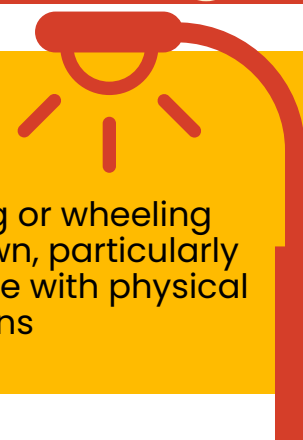


42%

have experienced issues when walking or wheeling including overcrowded pavements and obstacles such as signage and e-bikes or scooters

41%

feel unsafe walking or wheeling at night on their own, particularly women, and people with physical or mental conditions



Londoners see streets as the third most important priority for investment after the Tube and buses.

They told us they want:

- better pavement quality
- better facilities including toilets and places to rest
- safer and more accessible streets with better lighting and step-free access



Research carried out by Yonder Consulting on behalf of London TravelWatch

Campaigning to make buses better



We have continued to build on our 2024 report, **challenging TfL to show that it had a compelling programme to make bus services better**. Activity during the year included an open letter calling for improvements and a social media campaign including a video looking at how to make buses better and an explainer article of different types of bus interventions.

Following sustained engagement with TfL, we have written to the London Assembly Transport Committee with our finding that TfL has yet to set out fully what it thinks is needed to achieve its 2030 target for improved average bus speeds – and calling for more transparency by TfL about the future direction of bus services in London.

We also provided advice and feedback to TfL during a 12-month trial of **new bus shelter designs**. The trial has been testing a range of improved safety and comfort features, with different configurations of the features tested at sites across 12 London boroughs. We applaud TfL for inviting us and other important stakeholder groups to be involved in this initiative.

Calling for improvements in rail

Contactless payments have been extended to more stations in the London TravelWatch area, including London Stansted Airport. We've long campaigned for this station to be brought into the contactless payment system given the number of passengers penalised for travelling there without realising contactless is invalid for their journey.

Following last year's five-point action plan to improve the customer experience at **Euston station**, prompted in part by London

TravelWatch raising serious concerns, we welcome the further progress which has been made at the station. This includes continued focus on longer boarding times, prioritising the use of the main concourse screen for customer information, clearer signage around the station and improvements to a range of facilities.



We've submitted written evidence and appeared in front of the Railways Bill Committee in Parliament to inform the work of the Government to **reform British railways**, calling for passengers to be put at the heart of changes, and for London to be involved in decision making where appropriate.

Making the case for more accessible transport

Lift availability at stations has been a particular area of ongoing focus for our work on accessibility. More lifts at tube stations are now reporting real-time data, which is a step forward in helping people plan their journeys effectively: but we continue to press TfL for more clarity on the actual level of lift outages and what is being done to reduce that. Local media have also reported our concerns about lift outages at some rail stations in London, and we have called on operators to improve repair times for out-of-order facilities.

Following concerns expressed about **bus stop bypasses** by some disability groups, we have questioned TfL on the removal from its website of its 2024 report on this topic and on the status of its external review on bus stop bypass design. More positively, TfL confirmed the removal of two colourful road crossings from its network and that no more would be installed: this followed safety concerns raised in 2021 by several organisations, including London TravelWatch, about their use by people with visual impairments and guide dogs.

We were also cited multiple times in the **London Assembly Transport Committee's report on accessibility and inclusion**, calling for industry to more meaningfully engage with people with lived experience, including disabled people and older people.



Launch of our new podcast

In May 2025, we launched Talking Transport, our new podcast dedicated to talking about some of the main issues affecting London's transport. The launch coincided with our 25th Anniversary.

Guests so far have included Transport for London, Bus Users UK and Transport Focus.

Head to our [dedicated podcast page](#) to watch or listen!



Holding TfL to account

We raised concerns with TfL about the operational resilience of the **Bakerloo line**, building on our monitoring of the situation: [see the blog on our website for further information](#). TfL assured us that the service was recovering and detailed their efforts to keep the ageing fleet in service, though ultimately the need for new trains remains. We continue to monitor the situation and will look to hold TfL to their assurances.



Following major disruption to Tube and Overground services after a power failure, we publicly called on TfL to do better in **providing information to passengers during service disruption**.

TfL subsequently reviewed its use of social media and passenger communications, as well as briefing us on the measures they were taking to increase the resilience of its website.

Supporting the work of the London Assembly

Our insight has helped shape recommendations arising from inquiries carried out by London Assembly Committees, with London TravelWatch cited multiple times in resulting reports.

We submitted a written response to the Transport Committee's inquiries into the **walkability of London's pavements**. The meeting considered the impact street clutter, pavement quality and facilities are having on pedestrians across London.

Alongside submitting written evidence to the Transport Committee's road space, driving and congestion investigation, we gave evidence at a meeting to discuss **the impact on buses and bus speeds**. In the Committee's investigation into fare evasion, we called for TfL to provide more substance about deployment of new ticket barriers and the scale of resources available to improve enforcement in its strategy to cut fare-dodging.

We provided written and oral evidence to the Police and Crime Committee's investigation **into hate crime and violence against women and girls** on public transport, and provided input to the Budget and Performance Committee's review of **TfL's budget**.



Consultations

We responded to 150 consultations relating to various modes of travel and transport. This included proposals affecting 54 bus routes, the DLR extension to Thamesmead, the regulation of pedicabs, a review of the Capital Call assisted transport service, and proposed changes to the Congestion Charge and black cab fares and tariffs. We also took part in a range of fora, such as the Heathrow Area Transport Forum and engaged with TfL throughout the design of its proposed new bus stop design - we are happy to see the new designs currently being trialled around London.



**It was good to see our feedback incorporated into final plans.
For example:**

- In our response to proposed changes to the Congestion Charge, we called on TfL to put sufficient support in place to help those who most need it and were pleased that TfL decided to provide further support for low-income and disabled residents receiving certain benefits.
- Following our response to TfL's review of Capital Call, we were pleased that TfL extended the time before it closes and is offering travel mentoring to those who need support with the transition.

**In the past year
we responded to
150
consultations**

Casework - in numbers

Our dedicated casework team takes forward over 1,000 appeals a year from people who are unhappy with the response they have received from their transport provider to a complaint.

We manage appeals for London as well as on behalf of our sister company, Transport Focus. The most common topics we deal with are around issues with railways, Oyster and contactless payments, and Eurostar.

This year, the team resolved 1,412 appeals, 71 percent of which resulted in an improved outcome for the passenger. All those who appeal are invited to complete an anonymised satisfaction survey, and this year 74 percent provided positive feedback about the service they had received. The team also responded to five Freedom of Information requests.

London TravelWatch received eight complaints about the casework service provision, five of which were referred to the Local Government Ombudsman as they were related to TfL.

This year the casework
team secured
£56,000
in refunds to passengers



Your support was very prompt, the advisor was very clear in what they could offer. Their follow up was brilliant. Super service, thank you

I really appreciate your service, the level of professionalism with reference to the communication skills, transparency, and impact on TfL

Thank you for an expert and professional service



Our themes for the year ahead

1

More seamless journeys

We plan to develop recommendations for improving two aspects of seamless travel (one regarding streets, the other about transport interchanges) and advocate for them to be adopted by service providers.

2

Better transport services

We will hold public transport providers to account in how they address areas of challenge to service performance, alongside our regular work responding to consultations and engaging with TfL and national rail.

3

More accessible, inclusive and secure transport

We will press service providers for action on public transport hate crime and accessibility challenges, alongside our regular engagement holding TfL to account in delivering its [Equity in Motion](#) strategy.

4

Greater TfL ambition in building trust

We will develop recommendations for improving the perceived value for money of TfL services, alongside our continuing engagement to hold TfL to account for delivery of its customer strategy.

5

Closer working with the Transport Committee

We will ensure that London TravelWatch and the London Assembly Transport Committee continue to support each other in holding transport providers to account, as a new Chair takes their position in Year Three of the Committee's term.

6

Improved casework operations

We will aim to sustain the quality of our work in handling growing numbers of appeals and make more use of the insights from casework to promote improvements by transport service providers

How we are funded

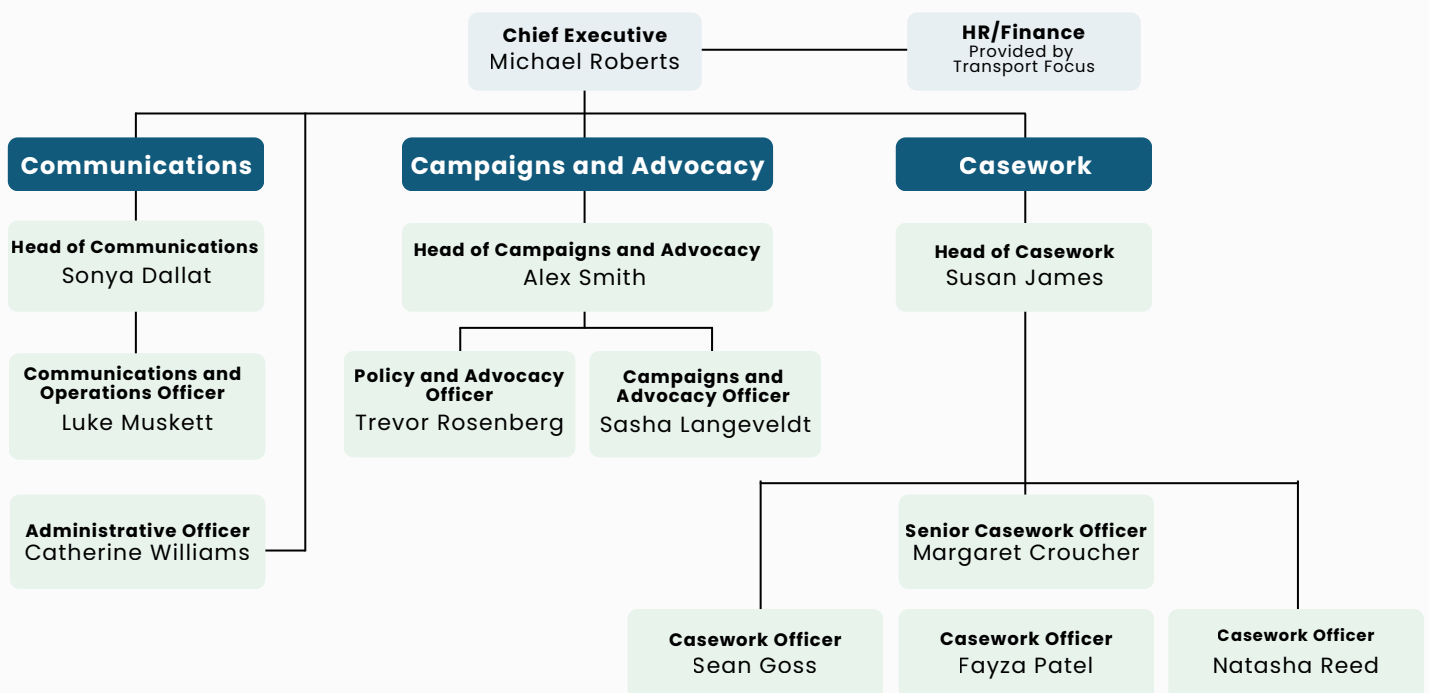
London TravelWatch is funded by the London Assembly in accordance with Schedule 19 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999. In 2025/26, our income amounted to £1.223 million and our expenditure was £1.243 million, subject to final audit.

We produce our full audited accounts every September and these are available on request.

Our board members

Tricia Hayes CB - Chair
Richard Hebditch
Priya Khullar
Tiffany Lam
Eddie Lynch MBE
Lara Sonola
Susan Stockwell

The London TravelWatch team



We are London's independent transport watchdog, working to make travelling in and around the capital better for everyone

A plain text version of this report is available on our website. However if you would like the report in another format, get in touch at info@londontravelwatch.org.uk