

Transport for London

London Underground



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Dear Val

Transport Committee meeting on 9 September

Thank you for your letter of 16 September following the recent meeting of the Transport Committee. I am sorry for the delay in responding.

Your letter raised a number of queries on behalf of the Committee and attendees at the meeting and I am replying with responses from London Underground and my colleagues in TfL London Rail, Surface Transport, Planning and Customer Services. These are set out below alongside each of the points you raised.

Any mechanisms TfL has in place to provide for staff across all its transport modes, including Tube, buses and Overground rail, and other relevant organisations such as Network Rail and ATOC, to work together to plan improvements to accessibility, particularly at interchange stations.

There are a number of such mechanisms, as follows.

The Mayor's Transport Strategy (MTS) sets out a policy framework to improve accessibility across the transport network. This covers staff service, information provision and the travelling environment.

Policy 21 of the MTS states:

"The Mayor, through TfL, and working with the DfT, Network Rail, train operating companies, London boroughs and other stakeholders, will seek to increase accessibility for all Londoners by promoting measures to improve:

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- a) The physical accessibility of the transport system, including streets, bus stops, stations and vehicles
- b) Information provision, staff service and the travelling environment”

The TfL Interchange team is a cross-modal function which prioritises and delivers integrated multi-modal transport improvements at interchanges across London. These involve the development and delivery of short, medium and long term improvements, including improved accessibility, subject to funding constraints.

This work is informed by the Interchange Best Practice Guidelines. This was re-launched as a web-tool in November 2009 and is accessible on the TfL website via the following link: www.tfl.gov.uk/interchange. You will note that accessibility is a key issue within the ‘Usability’ theme. Two additional programmes have recently been initiated, designed to deliver early customer benefits at little cost, namely:

1. **Co-ordinated management of interchanges:** the aim is to improve customer service through better customer information and assistance, and better maintenance and security. This involves collaborative management between modal operational staff, borough street managers and police.
2. **Co-ordinated interchange signage and way-finding:** the aim is to deliver better customer service through better integrated cross-modal signage and way-finding throughout interchanges and their surrounding environments. At some locations, where additional third party funding is secured, this will include the delivery of Legible London way-finding information, to be integrated with the multi-modal interchange signage.

Both these programmes are being carried out with the support and direction of a joint sponsor group which includes the TfL modes, TfL Interchange, Network Rail, ATOC and the TOCs.

The development of the MTS itself included consultation with Network Rail, TOCs, ATOC, user groups including those representing the disabled, older Londoners etc, and boroughs (as well as the general public). Their responses were also considered and helped shape the strategy’s approach to improving accessibility.

TfL’s Independent Disability Advisory Group was consulted during the development of the MTS and provides regular feedback on specific schemes as they are developed.

The sub-regional transport plans currently under development, in conjunction with the boroughs, will set out in further detail a strategy for improving physical accessibility in each of the sub-regions.

In addition to this overall context, TfL London Rail and London Underground both liaise regularly with Network Rail and the TOCs with regard to the planning and implementation of physical accessibility improvements, particularly at interchanges. One of the key interfaces is through DPTAC’s (Disabled Peoples Transport Advisory

Committee) Rail Working Group which occurs monthly. TfL also currently meets regularly with ATOC and Network Rail (and other transport providers) to discuss accessibility at the Olympics Accessibility Integration meeting.

TfL's Disability Equality Scheme (DES) is revised annually and sets out improvements to be made in the short term. It includes improvements at interchanges with other networks.

Borough Local Implementation Plans (LIPs) are required to set out improvements contributing to MTS goals, including improvements to physical accessibility. TfL reviews the LIPs on behalf of the Mayor and through this process is able to discuss synergies and co-ordinate programmes with the boroughs, such as street accessibility improvements to complement station accessibility improvements.

The weight / people capacity of the lifts at Stratford regional station.

The attached plan highlights each of the lifts at the station and their weight and person capacity.

This includes the short-height 'lifting platform' from the Jubilee line to the Western subway, which is rated at 400kg maximum weight. This equates to approximately 4 or 5 people, but obviously depends on luggage/equipment.

All other lifts at the station have or will have capacity for at least 12 people.

TfL's projection of the number of people in London with reduced mobility in 2031 and the basis for this projection including any estimate of the number of elderly people in London in 2031.

The Draft Replacement London Plan (DRLP) refers to the growing population, the elderly and those with mobility and access needs. Paragraph 1.13 states:

"An expected increase in the number of older Londoners by 2031 is likely to mean there will be more disabled people and people with particular mobility and access needs. Ensuring London and its infrastructure is accessible and inclusive will have to be a key theme of the new London Plan."

Figures 1.2 and 1.3 show the increase in London's population and the age structure of that population. Figure 1.2 shows the GLA's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment projections, which estimate that the population of London will be just under 9 million by 2031. Figure 1.3 shows increases in the elderly population of London for both males and females (if it is assumed that "elderly" refers to 70 and over). For example, the 70 age group is predicted to increase by several thousand between 2008 and 2031.

Please see below for Figures 1.2 and 1.3:

Figure 1.2 London's population 1971–2031

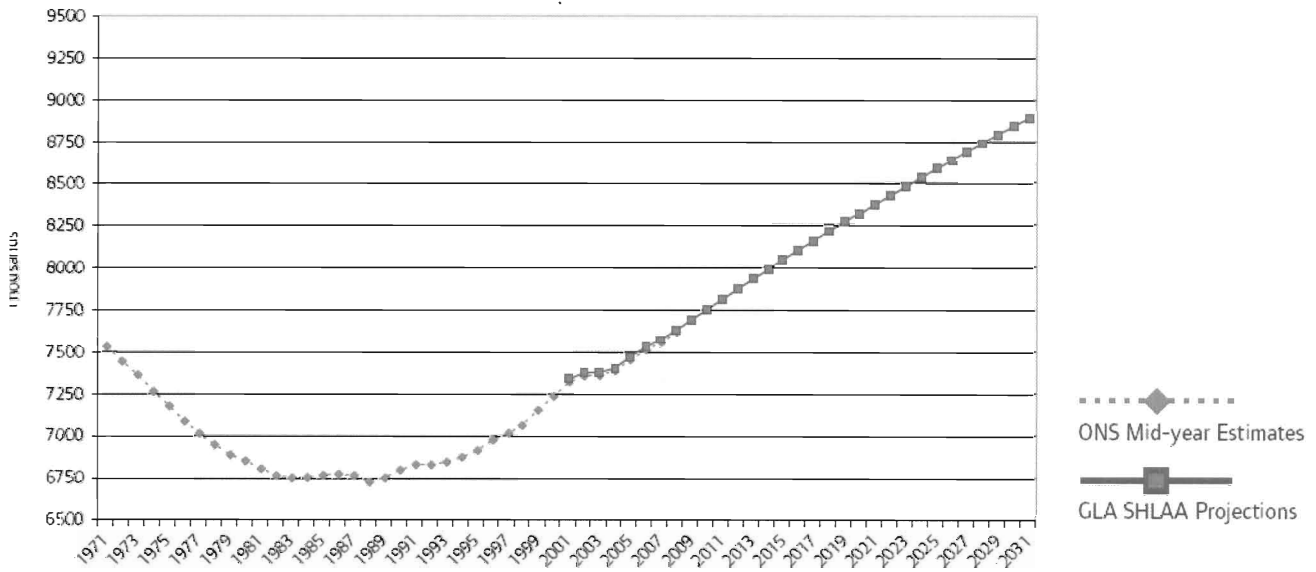
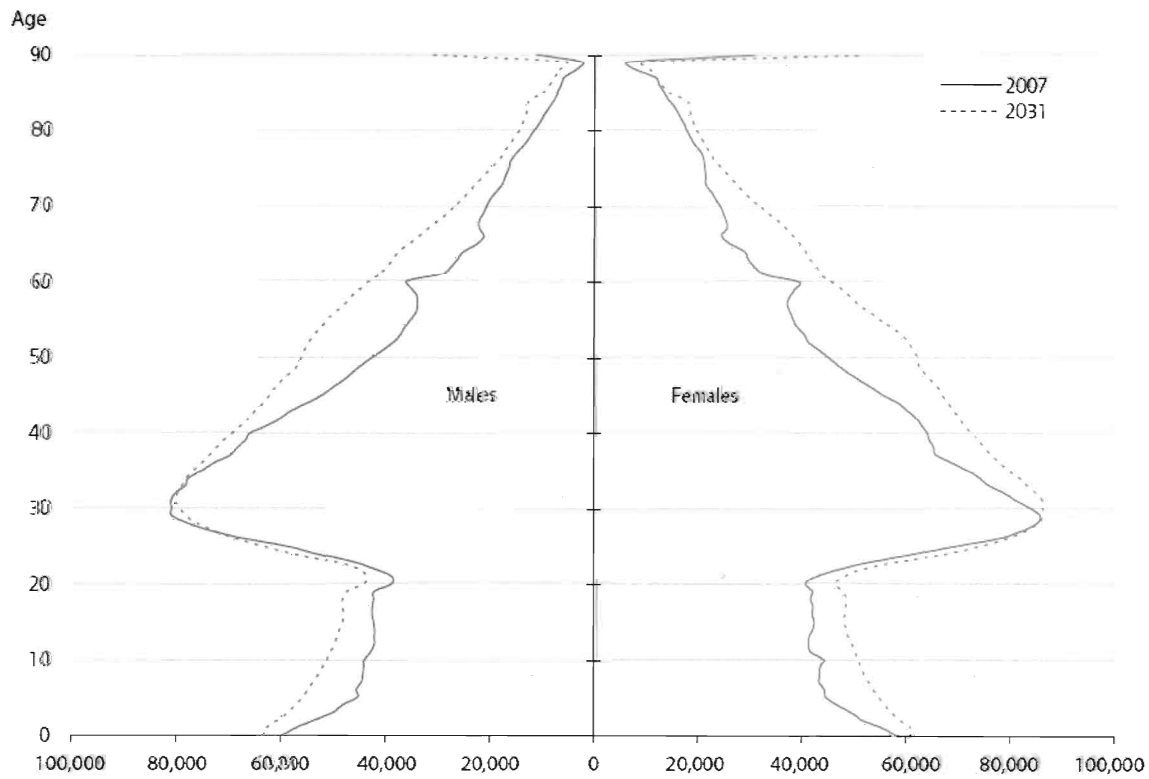


Figure 1.3 The age structure of London's population 2008/2031



Source: GLA DMAG

Any proposed changes to the disability and diversity awareness training for bus drivers following our feedback.

The training you recently observed has been developed in collaboration with the training division of the charity Scope. London Buses will arrange with Scope to review the course content.

London Buses accepts that the quality of training delivery is vital for successfully embedding messages with key staff. To that end, London Buses has recently agreed with the bus operators that staff in classroom delivery roles must become qualified to a minimum standard, i.e. the government's Preparing to Teach in the Life-long Sector (PTLLS) Level 3 qualification. This will ensure that training is delivered in a more engaging and interactive way, especially for those topics where behavioural change is required.

You may be aware that Jennette Arnold AM recently attended a course delivered by a PTLLS qualified trainer at Cricklewood Bus Garage on 22 September. I hope that you will have the opportunity to speak to Jennette and find out about her experience.

Of course, training is only part of the story since this can only ever be directed at a relatively small group of staff at any one time. TfL uses other tools (the Big Red Book for staff, roadshows, posters etc) to get key messages across and these do appear to be working.

London Buses constantly looks to improve its training programmes and will take your comments on board as we evolve and develop the disability and diversity awareness programme.

The minimum length of kerbside space required to ensure a bus stop is accessible.

The minimum permissible length of an accessible kerbside is 19 metres.

The improvements being made to TfL's Journey Planner to assist people with reduced mobility plan their journeys including any provision of information about accessible Network Rail Overground stations.

TfL's interactive map already provides detailed information about accessibility features at each station on the TfL network, including availability of step-free access lifts, the number of steps from street to ticket hall, interchanges and platforms and the extent of step between the platform and the train. The map is available via this link: <http://journeyplanner.tfl.gov.uk/im/SI-T.html>. As per our earlier submission to the Committee, such information is also available in our Step-Free Tube Guide and via the Direct Enquiries service.

TfL's Journey Planner Services team is in the process of finalising the prototype for a new Journey Planner option. This will improve the information provided to disabled

users navigating the transport system. This prototype is currently being tested with disabled members of the public to ensure it meets the needs of targeted user groups.

Once the development stage is complete, funding will be sought for the full implementation.

Why is a wheelchair user not allowed to use their own ramp to board or disembark from a train at an unstaffed Tube station? In determining the scope for any new Tube trains, is TfL considering designs that allow the use of self-operated ramps?

All London Underground Tube stations are staffed, and will continue to be so under the proposed changes planned for introduction next year.

The National Rail network has used manual boarding ramps for some time. The method of operation of these is that a member of staff has been trained in how to use the device, and how it interfaces with the train, and the safe way to assist people on and off the train both for the customer, the member of staff and for the train and station assets. These ramps are specifically designed to work with a particular design of train.

London Underground operates a more intense, metro-style service - up to 30 trains an hour on some sections - with much shorter dwell times in stations, vital to deliver the high volume throughput on which the city depends. In addition our platforms are much narrower and more congested. For these reasons, LU decided to pioneer the use of 'Platform Humps' (raised sections of the platform running for a length of approx. 30 metres) which would provide level access for wheelchair users, as part of our obligations under the Rail Vehicle Accessibility Regulations. These humps have the advantage of providing permanent and independent access on and off trains, and can be used by everyone. There is no need to book assistance. LU has won recognition at industry awards for its pioneering use of platform humps.

The interface between the platform and the train is managed extremely carefully to ensure the safety of customers, staff and of assets. We do not believe that it would be safe to use a manual board device which has not been specifically designed and tested to work in the Underground environment and with Underground trains. In addition, we believe that it could be a trip hazard when deployed. For this reason we do not encourage the use of manual boarding devices on our stations. However, LU continues to keep the use of such devices under review.

What, if any, action is TfL taking to help ensure ‘help points’ at stations are accessible to people who may not be able to press the buttons and/or have speech impairments?

Help points on London Underground stations are designed to be easily operable by someone who has limited dexterity. The buttons are large and operable either by a clenched fist or open palm

Help Points on London Underground are routed in the first instance to staff on the station. If a member of staff is unable to understand a customer, they may ask the customer to repeat themselves, but in such cases staff may simply go to the Help Point and have a face to face conversation.

When a passenger uses a Help Point on London Overground, the call is routed to the Control Centre for a response (and then onto the British Transport Police if no one can respond). However, the local station staff are also alerted as soon as the Help Point is pressed and the local (and Control Centre) CCTV monitors automatically switch to show the cameras which cover the Help Point. Again, if necessary staff may go and talk directly with the passenger.

All stations that are managed by London Underground and London Overground are staffed from before the first train to after the last train, enabling passengers to speak to a member of staff directly if they require additional information or assistance or are unable to use a Help Point. In addition to the improved CCTV coverage (which is monitored), staff regularly walk around the station and are encouraged, and trained, to engage with all passengers.

London Overground’s station improvement programme is upgrading the customer information systems at stations to ensure that station information (including service disruptions) can be transmitted to the stations automatically via Customer Information Screens and Public Address systems.

What are TfL’s plans for creating more humps on platforms at Tube stations? Which stations are TfL’s priorities for the installation of humps?

TfL’s pioneering use of platform humps is linked to the line upgrade programme, with level access being introduced in conjunction with the introduction of trains which are RVAR compliant.

At some stations a full platform hump isn’t the right or necessary solution, as the new trains achieve much of the necessary improvement. In such cases, instead of a platform hump other changes will be made (e.g. alterations to nosing stones) to provide level access. The table below outlines LU’s current plans for this provision.

Line	Number of level access platforms installed	Number of level access platforms yet to be installed (by date)
Victoria	11 as at 01/01/10	20 (August 2013)
Metropolitan	23 (Level access is designed to work with new S-stock trains, now being introduced.	9
Circle, Hammersmith & City & District lines (not including Metropolitan line)	NA- No new trains until 2011/12	90 (to be installed from 2010-2016 in alignment with the introduction of new S-stock trains)
Piccadilly	2	TBC- linked to plans for train replacement
Northern	2	TBC- implemented by 2017
Jubilee	26	TBC- implemented by 2017
Bakerloo	NA	TBC- linked to plans for train replacement
Central	NA	TBC- linked to plans for train replacement

Would TfL expect London Underground staff to provide physical support to a wheelchair user to help them board or disembark from a train?

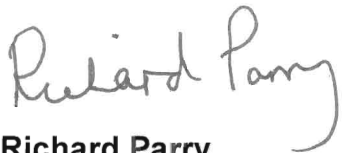
The physical support that our staff can offer varies depending on the staff member. We encourage staff to assist customers in the most appropriate way. We do not expect our staff to lift and carry wheelchair users on or off trains, as this is dangerous both for staff and customers.

What is the scope for installing a ramp into/out of the foot tunnel at Kew Gardens station to help people with reduced mobility access Kew Gardens from this station?

A ramp at this location would have to be of considerable length in order to be useful. The physical layout of the station means there is not sufficient space to make this possible.

I hope this information is helpful, but please do let me know if I can be of any further assistance.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Richard Parry". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large, sweeping 'P'.

Richard Parry
Strategy & Commercial Director