

## London Assembly Transport Committee – 22 July 2020

### Transcript of Item 6 – Q&A Session – How COVID-19 is Shaping Public Transport Provision

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** We will now move on to our question-and-answer session on shaping public transport provision and how COVID-19 is impacting on that. We have three sections of questions: the first on the impact of COVID-19 on the transport network, the second on the 3R framework [Remode; Retime; Rescale] and London Streetspace programme, and the third on future planning. As ever with the Transport Committee we have a full meeting and I want to make sure that we make the most of our guests' time. Without curtailing debate, I will keep us to time and move us on when that is necessary, not least because we want to make sure we do TravelWatch justice in the last part of the meeting.

I welcome our guests today: Dr Will Norman, the Walking and Cycling Commissioner; Alex Williams, Director of City Planning for Transport for London (TfL); Councillor Julian Bell, Chair of London Council's Transport and Environment Committee and a representative on TfL; and Nicole Badstuber, a transport policy and travel behaviour researcher at University College London and the University of Westminster.

Moving on, I will take the first question in the first set. This is addressed specifically or particularly to Will Norman. We will address questions to individuals. Of course, we have the opportunity of other guests coming in if that is appropriate.

To Will: what networks have been used to encourage the shift to staggered opening times and how receptive have businesses been in adjusting to those staggered times?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I am sure Alex Williams [Director of City Planning for TfL] would want to come in on this from a TfL perspective as well. TfL has been engaging businesses, employers and a huge number of people and has been writing to business groups and organisations. We have been using the Oyster travel data to communicate directly with customers and to inform people about the changing patterns of use. We have written to over 300 different schools in terms of that approach. I personally have had meetings with collections of the London Business Improvement Districts (BIDs) to talk about how COVID is changing the public transport system and how people move around the city. There is a huge amount of engagement going on through all the different networks, different stakeholders and Members of Parliament (MPs). I know we have been talking to many of your colleagues and people on the Assembly. We are trying to do our utmost to communicate through every channel we have available to us to talk about how we can spread the peak.

As Tony [Devenish AM] mentioned, the return to travel on the Tube is not as busy as it used to be, but we are seeing the numbers of journeys increasing. The Tube is up to about 20% of what it was last year. It is increasing 3% or 4% every day in terms of that. Bus travel is about 40% to 50% of what it had been in the past. We are seeing the numbers grow.

What we want to avoid is people travelling in the peak. Nobody wants to return to those very crowded buses and Tubes in the morning peak and in the evening peak. The trick is to talk to everybody, look at how we can stagger start times and how we can change behaviours to spread those peaks for those people who still have to travel.

I am sure Alex Williams [Director of City Planning, TfL] has more information in terms of some of the communications that TfL has been doing, including with the boroughs.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes, I am happy to come in, Chair, if that would help.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** That would be really helpful, thank you. While you are doing that, perhaps you could also answer the second question that I have. How has this translated into travel patterns on TfL networks? Will has answered some of that but you might like to fill in on that as well.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** I am very happy to. The key thing really is that at each stage of lockdown release, we have engaged with the relevant sectors ahead of that lockdown release to provide bespoke information and advice to them. Ahead of the schools partially reopening in June, we provided advice to every school in the capital, 3,000 schools, travel advice about avoiding public transport, walking or cycling, staggering journey times and that kind of thing.

Probably the best example I can quote is that ahead of the opening of non-essential retail in mid-June we engaged with all the BIDs all over London about what they should prepare for before that reopening. A key message that we were keen to get across at that time was to avoid the busiest times because what there had been was very strong peaks of travel in the early morning and about 5.00pm in the evening but a lot of capacity in the interpeak. Our advice to the non-essential retail was to start later and finish later to avoid the morning peak and avoid the evening peak.

What was really pleasing, certainly in the conversations within the New West End Company (NWECC) in central London, is that it provided a lot of the information about the starting and opening times of retail. They were listening to that. They were opening later and finishing later. Us starting today at 11.00am is a good example of that as well.

In terms of what effect that has had, certainly when we have looked at the hourly flows going through some of the stations, say, on Oxford Street, we are seeing that the peaks have not increased but the interpeak has increased in terms of people using it at 11.00am, 12.00pm, 2.00pm and also after the 5.00pm peak. It does look tentatively, I should say, certainly on the non-essential retail, that people are responding to that advice about using the network at different times.

The other thing I should highlight is that what we are all focused on now is September because all schools, universities and further education are going back later in September. That is a big challenge and there is a lot of work now to make sure that we encourage the education sector to look at that issue about staggering journey terms as well. Shifting by just half an hour the start and finish times would have a profound impact on how the bus network in particular operates in outer London. A lot has been done but there is a lot more to do on this area.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Hopefully, individual schools will be working with neighbours as well to stagger their times, which I know has been done in some areas.

If I could carry on with you, Alex, what impact on traffic levels is TfL seeing in response to the increased road user charges and the extended operational hours? What impact has that been having?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** It is worth giving a general sense about where we are. At the height of the pandemic, Tube ridership was down to around 5% of norm and on the road network we were down to around a third of norm. We are now back in a situation where road traffic is around 90% of normal levels and Tube ridership is around 25% of normal levels.

We are very concerned about this issue of what we are calling a 'car-led recovery'. In central London, we turned off the Congestion Charge scheme in March. We turned it back on in the middle of May, on 18 May, and we extended the hours and days of operation on 22 June. It is still very early days to draw out conclusions about what is happening there, but the initial data indicates that, during the week, flows into central London reduced by 8% and at the weekend it is by 27% but, as I say, this is a scheme that has only been in a matter of weeks. We will be kind of tracking that and seeing it, but the initial data are those two figures, 8% weekday and 27% weekend.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** OK. That picture will change. To all of you, I guess, talking about changing and how you might remodel or make changes to the system or the rules. A question that has been asked of a number of us is whether TfL should consider allowing non-folded bikes on trains and the Tube during those former peak periods to promote further cycling. Would you consider changing the seat layout to fit in more bikes?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Will I take that one to begin with? At the moment everybody is clear that folding bikes can be taken on the Tube at any time. Brompton and other makes are available. It is down to the discretion of the TfL staff on stations if it is overly busy or if it is difficult to get onto the trains. Non-folding bikes can be taken on large sections of TfL's Tube and rail network at the moment but, as you said, it is not at peak times. It is at non-peak times. I do not have all of this in my head but I know the District, Circle, Metropolitan and Hammersmith & City are the ones that tend to run Overground. On some of the outer sections of the Central line, the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) and Overground you can use them as well as on TfL Rail.

The central section and particularly the deeper Underground Tubes are where non-folding bikes are not allowed. There are two reasons for that. One is that there is a limit on capacity on those trains and folding bikes at busy times is a difficulty, which is why we do not allow them on peak for most of the places. The key thing is safety. Access to those deeper Tubes is largely by escalators. It is not safe bringing a lot of bikes down there. Secondly, in terms of evacuating trains in an emergency in those deep tunnels and those emergency procedures, we do not want bicycles getting in the way of that. Both of those reasons - the capacity issue but also key safety issues - still apply given the COVID crisis as is anything else.

There are no plans to change that at the moment, but I agree. I wish I had a really simple, pithy answer: you can take non-folded bikes on the Tube from this time. That does not exist. It varies line by line. What I would suggest is - and I can share it - a very helpful Tube map on the TfL website, which I am really happy to share with Committee Members. I am more than happy to pass on the Tube map of what lines you can take them on because I cannot give a fully comprehensive answer of which lines and which hours off the top of my head, but I will share that information with Members. If people want to disseminate that more broadly, it is important.

One of the things I would say is that it is important that we try to increase people cycling to stations and then taking walking and cycling journeys out the other end rather than trying to encourage more people to take their bikes on trains because of that limited capacity. Physically changing Tube trains and Overground trains is expensive. It is time consuming. There are other pressures on that network. For me, what we need to do is make sure that there is space on that network for those people who cannot walk and cycle and provide better parking solutions at stations, particularly in outer London, and increased bike hire and better walking routes in central London so that those active journeys can be part of a journey rather than everybody lugging bicycles, tandems and heaven knows what onto the Tube system, which is not a smart way of using what limited space we have available just at the moment.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you for that. It is something we will return to in terms of understanding where those constraints are, but encouraging people maybe who feel like they could cycle one way or for part of their journey might be an answer, but let us see how this plays out. The more we can encourage people to consider biking part of their route the better.

Both to you and to Alex, we are aware of changes to the TfL Journey Planner and those do flag up and prioritise walking and cycling certainly up to 40 minutes. The question for all of us is whether you can influence the routes planned by other applications like Citymapper or Google that we all use and are part of our journey planning.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** You are right. Given the increased need for more people to walk and cycle during this time and to make space on the roads, rail, Tube and buses for people who cannot, we have been doing quite a lot on our Journey Planner and on the website. That includes putting the new infrastructure on, like bike parking facilities.

One of the key things that has changed is that if you now go on to Journey Planner and you put in an inquiry for a journey that is less than eight kilometres, it will show the first option as a walking and cycling option. It is part of that behaviour change nudge mentality and showing that cycling is available. We are trying to improve that as we move on.

As you said, not everybody uses Journey Planner as their mechanism of navigating London. There is Citymapper. Google Maps is really popular. There is Apple Maps for Apple phones and there are various other apps and providers.

As you will know, most of TfL's data is open data and is shared and there are various application programming interfaces (APIs) so that changes to that data set automatically go out to other providers. We have been putting the new cycling routes and that data onto those other apps. I asked Apple Maps and Google Maps to come for a meeting in London before this crisis to discuss this in detail and so they flew over from the west coast. We discussed that with them in detail.

One of the challenges working with the really big technological 'big boys' like Apple and Google is that they are keen to make sure that what happens in one city is scalable and is replicable in other cities. It depends on data sets, which makes that more challenging. They have agreed to work with us. We are feeding them information, but the outputs are not always perfect. For Citymapper we are putting that information through there, as well as the cycle streets open source data. That is all happening.

The other thing that we have been doing is creating a digital infrastructure database for cycling. This is the first time we have pulled together all the on-street information, everything from bike lanes to bike parking spaces, you name it, anything to do with cycling, all on one digital database. That is now getting updated through volunteers as well as through boroughs as well as through TfL. It was interesting. Once we put that data out, there are new apps using that work in a new way and coming up with some brilliant algorithms to say, "If you want a fast route, this is one way of doing it. If you want a safer route, this is the way to do it. If you are interested in doing all of this on roads, that is one way of doing it. If you are wanting to take some of the off-street routes such as parks or canals, this is one way of doing it".

The more open data we put out there, the more imagination some of these brilliant software developers are using. We are trying to work as much as possible in partnership with them because we know that planning a journey as well as having the turn-by-turn data is important to get particularly new people cycling. Otherwise it does become quite complicated.

Secondly, I would add that it is not all digital. We also have the signage on the streets. I remember going out for a bike ride with Caroline [Pidgeon MBE AM] and Keith [Prince AM] and showing them how the wayfinding works at every junction. There should be a turn. Every so often a sign gets knocked off or something gets covered up and so, if people do report problems with the signage, there is a mechanism on the TfL website for reporting that and we can look into fixing it.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** In the longer term, hopefully, we can have some digital messaging as well around that, but that is not for right now, I guess. That is brilliant. Thank you for that. I was going to move on and ask Navin Shah to pick up the next two questions but, Alex, do you have anything to add before we move on?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** No, Will's answer was very comprehensive.

I suppose the other thing - and he might have said it and I might have missed it, apologies - is that there is a huge amount of change being delivered on our road network at the moment. One of the challenges we have is making sure that the mapping systems keep up to date with all of that change. There is a huge amount of borough delivery and our delivery and that is what we are trying to do with Google Maps and in our Journey Planner as well. For example, the new cycle lane on Park Lane is available on Google Maps. As soon as these new facilities come online, we need to make sure that those various app providers are aware of them and are telling customers out there that they can use these facilities.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** That is really helpful. Thank you and thank you for your answers.

**Navin Shah AM:** Good morning to our guests. My question to start with is for Will and Alex and it is on social distancing and capacity on the Tube.

If we can all use public transport, we have been encouraged to go back to work, and so how will TfL manage social distancing of one metre given that it can only operate at 25% capacity, Alex?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes, that is the big difficult issue that we are facing in London and indeed one that cities are grappling with all over the world, really. It is quite interesting if you look at the history of how we responded to this pandemic. At the height of the pandemic we were carrying around 5% of our normal flows. On a normal day we take around 4 million people. We were carrying around 200,000 people on our network. It is quite interesting that even then there were occasionally Tube trains that were busier than they should be in terms of being 30% or 40% full and things like that for a few stops.

For me, that highlights the challenge we have on a mass transit public transport system. We are not going to be always 100% able to manage social distancing on that network for every train carriage for every stop on the network. It is so fluid and so complicated that it becomes a challenge that is too difficult to cope with.

That has been acknowledged by the Government. It has recognised that social distancing is not always possible on a mass transit public transport system. We do not have caps on the Tube network. We have on the buses. They were 10 on a single-decker and 20 on a double-decker. They have now increased them to 10 to 15 on a single and 20 to 30. We are in a quite fluid situation and I would not be at all surprised if the Government's advice changes or evolves as this pandemic evolves and as it takes on board more public health research.

It is quite interesting if you think about how London compares with other cities around the world. On our Tube we are at around 20% to 25% of the normal ridership. In Paris that is around 45% of ridership, in Brussels 45% of ridership, and in Madrid 40% of ridership. They are at a similar stage that we are at in terms of the pandemic, but they have slightly differently nuanced advice in terms of messaging and also advice about what is acceptable on the network. With a face covering in France, every seat is available for use and that is an acceptable way of running the network.

We might well get into that position over the next few months as well, I do not know. The reality of a mass transit system is that it is very difficult to manage it in an absolute sense and say we will always be managing social distancing, but there needs to be a reality check about what we can do there. The guidance will probably change and evolve over the next few months, really. It is quite interesting if you think about the Prime Minister's announcement last Friday that that was the first change in many ways from saying, "Do not use public transport", to saying, "You can use public transport and we want you to go back to work". It is changing.

One of the things we are going to look at is the messaging within our stations. At the moment our stations have a lot of messaging in there about the two metres and they used to have messaging about avoiding public transport. Now we have taken that away. It is always a challenge, but the messaging needs to evolve with the messaging from the Government as well.

**Navin Shah AM:** The problem, Alex, is that if passengers breach social distancing in a big way with a large proportion of that, there is a huge element of risk here to safety. That will not breed confidence in people to travel by public transport. You said quite rightly that you are focusing on September. Is there something else more than messaging that you can do to have that capacity that we need but at the same time not breach? I agree the messages from the Government's directions and guidelines are changing and

it is a fluid situation but, at the same time, it will be worrying if we are not able to maintain social distancing at the level one would expect on mass transit, even.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes, I completely understand the challenge. There is that difficult balance between getting the economy going and back up and running and the legitimate fears about a second wave. I can completely understand that that is a circle that we are trying to square.

In terms of capacity, we are running at full capacity: 95% of the Tubes are running and 100% of buses and TfL Rail. The capacity is there.

One of the interesting challenges we have goes back to this point about messaging. There are plenty of times on our networks when there is stacks of capacity available and we are nowhere near having that concern about breaching social distancing guidelines. That is a key thing that we are going to be looking at in terms of messaging as we go into September. There are times on this network when there is lots of capacity and it is perfectly safe to use the network. I came in on a train in the peak today and there were three people on my carriage. When I travelled on the Tube at the weekend there were probably five people in the carriage at an off-peak time. There are plenty of times when it is safe to use the network. The network has never been cleaner, ironically, in terms of the enhanced cleaning we have up there. That is the messaging we want to get across to people. Think about the time you use the network, try to avoid the busiest times, and you can go into work or can go to the shop or to other activities or go to school using public transport. The messaging, inevitably, is going to evolve between now and September and beyond.

**Navin Shah AM:** If I can move on to my next question, it is to Nicole [Badstuber] and Julian [Bell]. What else should TfL be considering to manage the volume and timing of travel demand? Nicole?

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** Something that some other cities are doing is using real-time loading data of their trains, which I know is possibly available for the London Overground. This tells people how busy those trains are at the moment or at least use yesterday's data to tell you how busy your journey might be as you consider setting out on that journey. That might be something that TfL could think of if it has the data available to put out there to customers so that people can make that informed decision before setting off on their journey.

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** Yes, just quickly, Navin, I know one of the concerns of boroughs, particularly in central London, is the night-time economy and getting our cultural and artistic economy going again. It is good to hear from Alex [Williams] that those messages outside Tube stations saying, "Do not use public transport", have now gone. There is this delicate balance that we have talked about for London as a city in terms of its cultural and night-time offer. It is really important to get that part of the equation right and make sure that you have given sufficient reassurance for people to start to come into central London and get that leisure/culture part of the economy going again.

**Navin Shah AM:** Yes, I agree on that, but there is also an additional factor. For people who live in outer London areas, there is not much of a choice other than going across using public transport to get to work. Again, there is a capacity issue because of social distancing.

Is there something else that TfL can do in order to breed that confidence and provide safe transport journeys to places of work from outer London?

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Nicole is indicating that she would like to come back in there. Thank you.

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** Yes, I have two points. First, there has been research on the risk of getting coronavirus on public transport and most of that research so far is indicating that the risk is not very high in comparison to other situations. That is probably something to keep an eye on. Having the right cleaning procedures in place and the right protection for drivers and station staff in particular is really important.

The second thing that I wanted to say is around how some cities have looked at adapting their networks to suit a transition out of coronavirus lockdown or a new normal, and restructure the bus network to suit those travel patterns more. For instance, there is a concept around having the 15-minute neighbourhood or the 20-minute neighbourhood. That is less about getting people into the central business district in central London to work there because it is less about commuting now and having a transport network or public transport system that caters more for those other trips that you might be making. For example, those might be more orbital trips between where you live and the next neighbourhood or the next urban village and so bus trips might be much better to cater to that. Buses, of course, are more easily adaptable to changes. That is something to bear in mind. Maybe the focus in this new normal is not just about commuting into central London but catering for those other trips that people have like getting your kids to school. With staggered start times, that is another big challenge for working parents.

**Navin Shah AM:** Thank you.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much for that, Nicole. I know Will would like to come in.

Before you do that, Will, it might be appropriate to have your and Alex's view about the using real-time loading data because I know that was something we talked about around reimagining journeys when we were talking in June.

Also, the other thing we talked about at that point was about how once touching in on buses was re-instigated you would have more data around those routes that might be more heavily used than others and whether there was scope for any adaptation in terms of those.

Real-time loading data and whether that bus data is now helping to inform, Will, first and then I have Keith [Prince AM] who would like to come in.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I have to admit that as Walking and Cycling Commissioner I do not have a huge amount of knowledge on real-time loading data on the Tube and so I am going to pass that to Alex rather than me, Alison, because I am probably not the best person to talk to about it.



**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** On the issue about loading data, we have loading data, but it is not real time. We clearly have data for yesterday and I can get a daily chart showing where the pressures are on the network in terms of that real-time loading. That information is all available on our website and people can use that if they want to develop their app and things like that and distil that information.

What you often find with that kind of level of detail of data is that it is quite complex to grapple with and understand. One of the things we have been doing, rather than going into that level of detail, is providing advice to localities about where the peaks are and the times to avoid. I will give you an example of that. For the non-essential retail opening, we provided the two Westfields at White City and Stratford with data on the busiest times for the stations that served their establishments. Stratford is a big regional station and it is not going to be impacted by just Westfield. We said, "Those are the times that you need to avoid". In terms of their messaging on their websites, they have said, "You need to avoid those times". It is between 7.00am and 8.30am in the morning and between 5.00pm and 6.00pm in the afternoon at Stratford.

For me, it is about using that data and analysis we have and providing it in a clear and coherent way to passengers and to localities. I am going to give an example. I was dealing with the BID for Baker Street and that area the other day. They wanted to know their data and so we have supplied that data to them about the stations in their BID so that they can provide that local advice. That is what we are doing rather than line loading it. We are actually distilling it down into something that is a bit easier to digest, really.

It may be worth going back to the point that Julian [Bell] rightly raised about the night-time economy. One of the challenges there is that central London is clearly really suffering with this pandemic and one of the struggles we have for the night-time economy at the moment is that concert halls are not open, theatres are not open, cinemas are partially open and restaurants are partially open. Part of the problem in central London is that the footfall is very low. It was 72% lower than normal on Oxford Street at the weekend and during the week. Part of the reason for that is so much of their trade is people who work in the area but the offices are empty. One of the big changes from last week was the Prime Minister saying, "You can go back to work". One of the things we are certainly going to be looking at is how that stimulates other employers to get back into business.

The other point I would say is that on buses, we do have that data and that has been very useful in how we plan the network. One of the great things about the bus network is that it is quite agile and we can redistribute buses. With less demand and flow going into central London, we are looking at that issue about redistributing supply to outer London in particular and we are looking at that particularly ahead of the schools reopening in September. There are around 66 priority secondary schools where we are fairly confident there is going to be a problem on the bus network and that is where we need additional supply. We are using that data and analysis to reallocate and redistribute supply to the areas that need it.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** That is great.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Alison, I wanted to pick up on Navin's point around journeys in from outer London into central London and the challenges associated with that. I am going to say a couple of things.

One is that Nicole is right around the importance of those local journeys. There is the stuff we have talked about in terms of staggering start times, some people continuing to work from home and people wearing masks and their own personal behaviour on the transport system. TfL has introduced a huge number of measures to keep passengers safe from the hospital-grade disinfectant that protects places for up to 30 days to the constant cleaning. The fact that a Banksy [artwork] was cleaned off a Tube carriage before anyone knew it was there shows how effective - in a slightly tongue-in-cheek approach - and how quickly things are getting cleaned before anyone realises it. Credit to the cleaners and all the people who are doing that hard work. The one-way systems in Tube stations, I hope, will help, the hand sanitisers and all of that. There is a massive amount to make people feel safe.

The buses do have a key role to play in this and part of that is keeping the bus drivers safe. The new screens should help with that in terms of protecting them. Also, we are extending the bus lane hours to make those journey times more reliable so that people will spend less time on those journeys coming in or going onto orbital and radial routes in central London.

Once people get into central London, there is also the point around crowded transport hubs. If you go to London Bridge, a station that gets hundreds of thousands of people coming in and you can see them streaming across on a normal day across London Bridge into the city, what we have been doing through the Streetspace programme, which I know will come on to, is creating more space. To reduce the waiting times within the station, we have space allocated for people to reduce the crowding within the station by taking space on the on the Streetspace.

All of these measures will come together, and I hope will provide some reassurance of the huge amount that TfL is doing to make it as safe and convenient and as fast for people to use the public transport system if they cannot walk or cycle.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Prince?

**Keith Prince AM:** Thank you, Chair. My question first question is to Nicole. Would you agree, Nicole, that if someone was travelling from outer London to inner London on a motorcycle, it would reduce the demand on other public transport?

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** I guess, yes, in principle. The thing to bear in mind, though, always is that the thing that is of scarcity in London is road space and a motorcycle will still take up more road space than a bike and more road space than if you were in a bus in normal crowded conditions, obviously not at the moment.

**Keith Prince AM:** That is the point, Nicole. We are talking about at the moment. At the moment, a motorcycle would take up less road space than a car. It is arguable whether it would take up more or less road space than a bus, but it would also free up space on that public transport, be it a bus, a train or a Tube, for someone else who was not able to ride a motorcycle. Would you not agree that?

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** Yes, but I feel like you want that question to go somewhere else. Yes, sure, it gets someone off the public transport but --

**Keith Prince AM:** It does not matter where the question is going --

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** The point with this one, Assembly Member Prince, is that there are relative decisions to be made and you are absolutely right. I am going to wind this up in a few minutes and so if you would press on?

**Keith Prince AM:** Can I ask a question of Alex? It is based on that and it will be a very quick question.

Will, motorcycles do not take up any real road space. They move around. They have never been seen as an issue of congestion. We know that modal shift to motorcycles reduces congestion.

I cannot understand at this moment in time - and only for this moment of time I am asking - why we cannot allow all motorcycles to travel into London without paying the Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ) charge. I just cannot understand it. It would free up space on public transport. It would free up space on the roads. From a COVID perspective, you cannot get more protected from COVID than being a motorcyclist, frankly. I do not see why there cannot be an exception at this moment in time on the ULEZ just for now.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Motorcycles are exempt from the Congestion Charge and the Congestion Charge by its nature and its name is to reduce congestion. They can come into the Congestion Charge Zone.

The ULEZ is not to do with congestion. It is an ultra-low emissions piece, which is an air quality measure. That is why we have that measure in addition to the Congestion Charge piece. The very last thing any of us want at the moment when we have a respiratory pandemic is bad air quality. We are seeing increasing levels of evidence coming through from around the world that poor air quality is a contributor to the seriousness of COVID. The last thing I want to do at the moment is relax our air quality conditions within any part of London as part of a response to this.

Motorcycles are exempt from the Congestion Charge, recognising your point, but it is a separate issue around the ULEZ, which is a specific policy and programme that is tackling air quality rather than congestion.

**Keith Prince AM:** OK. I am not going to prolong this. I appreciate your time, Chair. All I am going to do is to leave you with this, Will. It was not the Mayor's choice to reintroduce the ULEZ or the Congestion Charge. It was not the Mayor's choice to ban motorcycles during this time because of air quality. He was forced to do that. Had it not been for the Government to insist that that was reintroduced, those motorcycles would currently be allowed to travel inside London. Your answer, with all the greatest respect, is a bit ingenuous because the Mayor had the opportunity to do what he wanted to do, which was to allow vehicles in at this time, but was stopped from doing that by the Government.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Can I add something, Keith? What I will do after this meeting is I will dig out the numbers on the compliance levels for motorcycles in the ULEZ scheme.

**Keith Prince AM:** It is 96%.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** That was the figure in my head but we track it every month and so I will dig out the latest data for you and send it over.

My point really is that motorcycles have the highest level of compliance of any vehicle entering the ULEZ scheme. You need to think about the value of giving an exemption to that 3% that are not already compliant. They have the lowest standard. Is it Euro 3 for motorcycles?

**Keith Prince AM:** Correct.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** It is a very small number of vehicles that have to pay it and very few actually do pay it because --

**Keith Prince AM:** That is the point. Chair, I am really grateful to you. I will stop there. I could go on. I will stop.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much.

We will now move on to a section on the 3R framework and the London Streetspace programme. I am going to kick off with the first question, if I may. It is broadly to Will [Norman] and Alex [Williams] but Julian [Bell] and Nicole [Badstuber] may of course wish to comment.

I am going to take this as quite a long question because I would like you to pick all of them up together. It is around the level of compliance on car-free roads in central London, with a particular focus on how they are being enforced. What impact these schemes have had on levels of walking and cycling if it is not too early to tell? What the effects have been on traffic flow, road safety and cycling and walking rates on other Streetspace schemes implemented to date? How are the car-free roads being implemented? What is their impact and what is the effect on the traffic flow of other Streetspace schemes?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I will have a go at answering that. The Streetspace programme was brought in as a rapid temporary measure for creating more space to enable more people to walk and cycle. We have heard about the constraints on the public transport network in terms of capacity. If a fraction of those journeys that were formally made by public transport end up being by car, the city is going to gridlock. That is not good for anyone. It is not good for our economy. It is not good for our air quality. It is not good for road danger.

The Streetspace programme is not just about car-free streets. There are three aspects to it. One of them is the temporary cycle lanes on main roads. Park Lane is a good example. Alex has already mentioned that one. The second piece is making the pavements around high streets as well as around transport hubs, like I mentioned at London Bridge, wider to allow people to queue for shops or to socially distance while they are moving around.

The third piece is low-traffic neighbourhoods, which is essentially reducing access or creating access-free. This is largely in residential areas. There are some in central London as well that allow people to still be able to drive and access buildings, but they stop through traffic and rat-running, making it safer.

On the speed at which this is being delivered, at the moment we have 37 or 40 kilometres of cycleways that in the last eight weeks either have been completed or are under construction. Within the boroughs we are funding something like 400 School Streets, 170-plus low-traffic neighbourhoods and 66 cycle routes. I just want to pay tribute to TfL and the borough officers for just how fast that is happening and the speed and the skill by which that is happening. At the moment, certainly my focus is on the delivery of this and I know all the boroughs are focusing on the delivery of this to get that in.

In terms of compliance, there is no data that I have that I am aware of at this point because the schemes are still going in at the moment, but in terms of enforcement I can talk a bit about how some of those schemes are getting enforced. Some of them are physical barriers. For example, in Broadway Market in Hackney, there are hostile vehicle mitigation barriers that are used for a market on a weekly basis. Those are now being used on a permanent basis to close that road. It still allows access to those businesses but closes it to through traffic. That is an example where enforcement is a physical barrier. We are also seeing planters in many parts of London, which are physically blocking roads to motor traffic.

We also have a system of fixed and mobile cameras using automatic number plate recognition. These are important when you are filtering roads that enforcement is being done by fixed cameras, which we will all be aware of, that take a number plate, but also the boroughs have these cars that have various gadgets on their roofs and things that pop out. Those can move around between these different filters in a random way to allow that enforcement.

It is too early to get data off that at the moment. I will ask for that data to be collected so that we will be able to share that in terms of the enforcement but, for example, I know some filters went in yesterday and we are too in the thick of the delivery at the moment to fully understand what level of compliance is happening.

There is also the usual policing activities and the street enforcement activities that are being delivered by the boroughs as well as the stuff that is on the TfL Road Network (TLRN), which is TfL. I hope that addresses the bit on the compliance.

Was there a third point around, sorry, the impact that it is having on traffic levels, pedestrian walking and that sort of thing?

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Yes.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Yes. What we are seeing is that during lockdown traffic levels fell really considerably across the board. What we saw were a huge number of cyclists and people out enjoying cycling. The number of cyclists has been sustained. We have seen the cycling levels being massively up.

This does not come as a great surprise because, where we have installed cycle lanes in the past, we have seen more people using them. Where we have installed low-traffic neighbourhoods in the past, we have seen people using them. We have seen over the weekend between two and three times as much cycling.

We saw a drop in weekday cycling at the early stages of the lockdown, which one would expect because most people were working from home and therefore were not commuting. Amazingly, despite the lower

numbers of journeys, weekday cycling is back up to its normal levels despite most people continuing to work at home, as we have heard about the lockdown. Overall, we have seen a huge increase in in cycling.

This is also being reported through the private sector. I was talking to the Chief Executive of Halfords, which has seen a huge increase in demand across the board. Bike Brompton has seen a five-fold increase in sales since April. I spoke to someone in who lives in Waltham Forest who was saying that there is a six-week waiting list to get bikes at the moment in bike shops in Waltham Forest. I have been talking to the bike industry about how we can get more bikes into London because of the priority of this. We have seen that shift.

Traffic, on the other hand, is beginning to return. Traffic on the TLRN on Friday was only 7% down and we are seeing in central London it is still about 30% down, whereas in inner and outer London it is 10% to 15%. It varies a bit between the days. We are seeing more people using the roads, but we are seeing a really significant uptake in the amount of cycling. Where we are putting in the infrastructure, as we have done for the last four years, we are seeing increased numbers when there is safe infrastructure.

Sorry, there were quite a lot of clauses. Does that answer all your questions, Alison?

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** That covers pretty much everything. I thought it was helpful to roll it together. I would like to move on but if anybody else has any comment on that? I do not know whether Julian has anything to comment on that at the moment.

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** To re-emphasise what Will said about being in the delivery stage, this is an enormous effort from the boroughs to do this in such a short window. It is a short window in actual time but it is also a short window in people's memories of all the benefits of lockdown in terms of not only the lack of cars and congestion but what translated into improved air quality. Across our borough, we had a 25% reduction in nitrogen dioxide levels. We have to hold onto that because there is certainly pushback from many people about some of the low-traffic neighbourhoods and I guess we will get on to that in a minute, but it requires some political leadership to do it.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you. That was very helpful. Thank you very much, both of you, for that full response to the question.

**Tony Devenish AM:** My first question is to Will [Norman] and Alex [Williams]. Good morning. What are you doing to ensure that the introduction of the low-traffic neighbourhoods is not moving the congestion and pollution into nearby roads? This is a great question because when I first became a councillor 15 years ago, my Director of Transportation - whom you will remember; he is now retired - Martin Lowe used to always say, "Transport and traffic is like water. If you push it one way, it may not go the way you want it but it will end up somewhere".

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Thanks, Tony. The low-traffic neighbourhood is a relatively new concept in London. We had been rolling them out prior to this, but the idea is to basically look at a traffic cell, areas that are surrounded by main roads, and look at how we can reduce the traffic that flows through that. It still allows people to drive to their homes, get deliveries, get rubbish picked up and get emergency services, but it is about reducing the movement through that and preserving

some of what Julian [Bell] alluded to in terms of the benefits of during lockdown when we saw lower traffic in neighbourhoods. We saw kids being able to safely go to the parks. We saw people being able to run and being able to walk. Crucially - and it goes back to something that was mentioned earlier - there is this idea of localisation and how we get those local high streets back and those local journeys.

The low-traffic neighbourhood is not about shifting car journeys onto other roads. By opening up those streets to enable people to rethink how they are moving around with a focus on walking and cycling, it is about trying to shift those journeys from cars to other modes of transport.

All respect to Martin [Lowe], who is now retired. There is a really great study that was done on low-traffic neighbourhoods on a global level, which took in about 70 different case studies from 10 or 11 different countries. Maybe Nicole [Badstuber] knows this better than me. It is the Cairns study of about 10 or 11 different countries. What it shows is that traffic does not behave like water. It does not just flow through pipes finding the easiest parts. It is actually part of human choice, I suppose, and people make those different decisions. It showed that within half of the case studies there was an 11%, 12% or 13% reduction on the number of vehicles in the whole area. It was reduced, including on the main roads. The research globally certainly showed that low-traffic neighbourhoods do not just shift traffic from one place to another. They do to a degree and it is about putting some of the traffic onto those main roads where most of us would agree it should be rather than cutting through residential neighbourhoods and moving through those areas. That was the international evidence.

We have been delivering, as I said, some low-traffic neighbourhoods elsewhere in London. Everybody says that London is different, but when we look at some of the low-traffic neighbourhoods in Waltham Forest we have seen a reduction of traffic by 90% in some place and across the whole area a 56% reduction of traffic on those roads. While there has been some increase on the main roads, they have not taken all of that traffic displaced. Something like 30% has just been reduced.

Why that has happened and what is so encouraging about this approach is that there has been a really significant behaviour change associated with the redesign of those roads. Just one year after some of the implementation of those low-traffic neighbourhoods in Waltham Forest we have seen increases of people walking by 32 minutes and cycling on average 32 minutes per week, which bucks the entire national trend of falling levels of physical activity. Tony, you will know the Prime Minister holds to this. I was in Number 10 last week talking about this. The importance of maintaining people's health and coming out of this public health crisis without sowing the seeds for the next one is so important. Tackling physical activity, tackling air quality and enabling more people to be more active - and being more active in their everyday lives, not just runs and leisure activities - is absolutely essential for building the resilience of our city and continuing to build the health benefits as well as the transport benefits with it.

We are in the thick of delivery at the moment. We are delivering at such speed. I will agree that not everything is going to be a great success. When we are delivering at this speed, the way I have been talking about it is we need to learn fast. If we are going to fail, we need to fail fast and we need to adapt it. Some of the schemes have already been adapted to monitor that. We need to also judge a transport change not immediately one day after it has gone in or one week after it has gone in but let that human decision-making, rather than water flowing through the pipes, adapt. What we are doing with all of these schemes is monitoring and adapting them.

They are all temporary schemes. They are being done under the statutory powers that the Government has provided all highway authorities in the country to deliver these temporary schemes. If communities agree with them, we will engage them through consultation, but there might well be needing to be tweaks, changes, improvements and what have you to learn from if some of those become permanent in the future.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Thank you. Can I ask one very quick follow-up question and then I will let Assembly Member Kurten come in. Thank you for that. We do not disagree on the principle. It is about the implementation.

Can I just get you to agree - you touched on the temporary nature - that there will be full public consultations if and when you decide these are going to become permanent, with a decent timescale for people to genuinely be consulted, not to have it stuck on page 64 of the TfL website for three or four days but proper quality public consultations?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Yes. As I said, the way that we are delivering this, at the moment, is through the statutory guidance that we have had from the Department for Transport (DfT). We are working exceptionally closely both with the DfT and Number 10 on this and we all share the same goals on this. We will all be aware that the Mayor and the Prime Minister do not always see eye-to-eye on everything, but this is something where everybody has a shared goal and a shared outcome in terms of getting more people walking and more people cycling.

You are right that these are temporary measures. If we move to permanent, we will have to be looking at how we do that and how we engage communities. One of the things that we are developing at the moment - and Alex's team is working on this - is an online map so that people can comment on these things as they experience them. It will be a slightly different way of doing a normal public consultation, which is producing some drawings and some abstracts and then saying, "This is what is going to happen". Now in some cases we will have some of these schemes and, "What do you think? What might need to be improved?"

One of the things I am insisting on is that no one outside maybe these four walls or these four sides of my screen will know what a TfL road is and what a borough road is. Who knows that? I did not before I did this job. We need to have all of this on one shared map so that this is not just going on a TfL website or this is not just on a borough website. For heaven's sake, where does Ealing stop and Hounslow start? I know that Julian [Bell] will be able to tell me, but most people in real life do not know this. It is trying to think in a different way, not coming back from the quality of the consultation but the way we consult and engage, so that it is more accessible, more user-friendly and people can contribute to this. That is going to be a really important part of how we go forward

There are almost two strands of work going on at the moment. There is the delivery focus and every one of my team will know all I am banging on about is, "Delivery, delivery, delivery", but it is also about monitoring, engagement and then understanding, tweaking and changing.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Thank you.



**David Kurten AM:** Good morning. Will, I want to put to you a couple of cases where the low-traffic neighbourhoods seem to have gone wrong because of feedback I have been getting from taxi drivers and other people, businessmen and businesswomen.

One is in the area where TfL is putting in cycle lanes on Euston Road. That is narrowing the road space for other vehicles. That is next door to some of these low-traffic neighbourhood schemes that have been put in by the local councils. Camden Council, for example, has blocked off one of the entrances from the neighbourhood south of Euston Road onto Euston Road itself. I am hearing that there are immense amounts of congestion in the Euston Road area simply because you have two things happening at the same time: TfL is doing something to reduce road space and then Camden Council is doing something to reduce access to the same road space. This is something that is not working.

What can you do and what will you do to rectify the situation around Euston Road?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** To come back to one of the points I made earlier, David, with all respect to Martin [Lowe], Tony's [Devenish AM] former colleague, the evidence shows that traffic is not like water. There is human decision here. We need to let some of these schemes bed in a little bit and understand them. There is a full monitoring and evaluation process going on for some of these bigger schemes like Euston Road and so we can manage to change that if and when we need to.

It seems that, like you, I get a lot of correspondence from various different people. I get a balance of people who really like some of this stuff and really object to some of this stuff and I imagine all of you as Assembly Members get similar levels of correspondence. You get irate correspondence from both ends of the spectrum and I am sure you will all be aware of that, but I know that there are a lot of concerns.

Euston has only just gone in but Park Lane, for example, has been in for a bit longer. I have a lot of people saying, "There is gridlock now". I did ask TfL to look at what the timings are for journeys. The journeys on Park Lane are only 40 seconds longer on average on that section, but as part of a longer journey from Vauxhall Bridge to Marble Arch, for example, along Park Lane takes exactly the same time as it did pre-lockdown.

Let us let these bed in. If there are problems with them, we are monitoring it and we can change them. As we said, they are temporary, but I do want to give these enough time to bed in so that people can adapt to them.

**David Kurten AM:** You are comparing two different things there that might be different because traffic pre-lockdown was much greater in general in total than now. If the traffic levels in the whole of London get back up to pre-lockdown levels, the congestion on Park Lane, as you say, is not going to be 40 seconds longer. It is going to be an awful lot longer than that.

That was not what I wanted to ask you about. You might want to come back on that, but the other thing I did want to ask, the second thing, the last thing, is that again I am getting a lot of correspondence from people living in some of the inner London boroughs like Tower Hamlets, like Islington, like Hackney, where it is not just car users who are being affected. I understand you want people to get out of private cars and walk and cycle, but it is business owners who have to make deliveries. It is emergency vehicles. It is taxis

who need to go to places and pick up and drop off disabled people. They do not have some of the access that they would do. You really have to think about those people.

What would you say to business owners who perhaps do business in one of these new low-traffic neighbourhoods and then find, because they have only one way out of the neighbourhood and two or three of their access points have been cut off, their delivery times are taking a lot longer and that is actually affecting their business. When that happens, what will you do to rectify the situation so that businesses do not suffer, for example?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I come back to two things on that. One is that the way that the low-traffic neighbourhoods are designed is not to prevent access. It might restrict access into some areas and change some of the ways that people get around in that, but it certainly is not to stop access. We are working very closely with the emergency services and that is why we are bringing in a camera approach to enforcement rather than just blocking off all the streets using bollards. That does enable the emergency services to go through.

In terms of businesses specifically, I would say two things. One is that I have been talking to freight organisations and other businesses through the BIDs and understanding this. I know that they share my concern that it is not just that traffic might go back to pre-lockdown levels, which I want to avoid, but my worry is that it goes back to far more than that. If we get that shift of journeys by people who were previously using public transport to private cars - we have seen this in Asian cities as they have come out of COVID - it is going to be bad for everybody. The deliveries and the freight and those essential journeys that keep London thriving are going to get stuck in gridlock. We are seeing this in other cities. That is why we are trying to enable as many of those people who can walk and cycle to walk and cycle for their journeys to free up the space on the roads and on the public transport system and to use those if they cannot.

I know. I am not a fanatic. I know that not every journey can be walked or cycled. We do need to have deliveries. Many people cannot do that, but we need to make as many of those people who can do those journeys as possible to do that because the last thing businesses I have spoken to want is gridlock or air quality problems, which put people off coming into central London or worry about that.

The third point is that learning again from low-traffic neighbourhoods that we already have, where we have delivered these things, what we have seen for businesses is an increase in footfall in their shops and an increase in spend in their shops. These studies are not done by me or TfL. They are done by universities and I know Nicole [Badstuber] could probably comment far better than I. She is far better qualified than me on this stuff. We have seen 40% more footfall and 30% more spend, if I remember my figures correctly. While a lot of people are anxious around change and change on the transport system always creates a very emotive approach, what we have seen once people get used to them is that this is good for business. This is good for business by preventing lockdown but it is also good for business in terms of encouraging footfall and spend on the high street, which is something we all need to be seeing as we come out of this crisis and the perils of the economic dark clouds that are looming for everyone in London.

**David Kurten AM:** With respect, Will, I do not have too much time to go into it and I know we have to move on --

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** We do, yes.

**David Kurten AM:** -- but I do wonder about the studies you talk about and about businesses having increased footfall and increase spending in their shops. That is not what I am hearing from some of the people who have to do deliveries and their access is blocked off in some of these low-traffic neighbourhoods.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I am really happy to share the data because I know every study that has been done either here or abroad has shown that same pattern. I am really happy to share some of that with you, David, if you would like.

**David Kurten AM:** Yes, that would be good, but also maybe that was data from before the lockdown and before the COVID-19 situation. What is happening now might be different. It would be good if you could send that to me so that I could have a look. Thank you.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Assembly Member Kurten, we have had an undertaking that they will come back with data. There will be an opportunity for us later in the year to look at this perhaps in more detail because it would be really interesting to understand how it has played out. Things will take a bit of time to bed in and there are lots of opportunities here, but it will be really interesting to hear that how that plays out. For example, we are getting more deliveries through online purchasing and that is a dynamic that I am sure we will be feeding into all of this as we go forward.

Assembly Member Devenish, would you like to pick up your second question? Then we can keep things moving forward. Thank you.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Chair, before I do, I would like to echo David's point. I am out in central London every night in main restaurant areas. Will, I totally agree with your positive attitude for modal shift, but I do have to make a plea for my older residents. What I am noticing is that it is the 30- and 40-something-year-old, dare I say, white architect cyclists who are out socialising in central London and not my older residents. That may be in part because they are still worried about the whole COVID thing, but I am concerned. I am getting an awful lot of postbag at the moment on this. They do not feel they can drive to their normal restaurant or take their grandchild out and I am concerned about their social isolation. Any information you have when you share the data in terms of older demographics I would be really interested in, please.

On to my actual question - and thank you, Chair, for giving me the time - how should the needs of Londoners for whom cycling and walking may be currently impractical be factored into TfL's re-mode plans, please?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Tony, I do agree with you on older people and the worries around isolation. I was in Soho briefly. I cycled through part of that. It was wonderful seeing some of the streets that had been closed off and turned over to that restaurant trade and I could see people coming back. I know this is the first week of it and people are apprehensive about returning to some of that, but I hope that turning over some of that space to those restaurants and allowing more social distancing in those spaces will help restore confidence in this.

Not everybody is going to come back at the same time and certain demographics might feel more confident faster and some demographics are maybe less at risk than others, but I hope that some of those groups that we saw out and about this weekend will be the pioneers to do this in a safe way and restore that.

In terms of people who cannot walk and cycle, I said it earlier on. I know that not every journey can be walked and cycled. I am not a fanatic on this, but I am always amazed how many journeys can be walked and cycled. In terms of those journeys, this is about enabling those people who can walk and cycle to walk and cycle and then freeing up space on the roads and on the public transport system so that those other people who cannot do it do have that space and are able to do that.

We are doing our utmost to make sure the changes that we are doing are as inclusive as possible. Older people mention to me that queuing at traffic lights, for example, is a problem where you have busy pavements and people do not feel confident and do not have the mobility to move quickly across the traffic lights. One of the things we have been doing is reviewing all the traffic light signals. Over 1,000 traffic lights have been reviewed in central London to allow more time for people to cross the road and less queuing time on pavements, for example.

We are doing our utmost. If you pop down to Brixton, there is a good example of where the increased space around the bus stops has been done in a way that will allow people with disability or mobility challenges or young people to access that new space. We are doing our utmost to include some of the tactile needs for people with visual impairments.

Some of the stuff, quite frankly, that has been rolled out very quickly is not up to scratch and that is why we are going back to review some of that so that it is as accessible as possible. Then there is also this issue of how we make sure that, as we move forward in this and if any of these measures do become permanent, they are going through the full engagement, as we talked about earlier, and are out there.

I do not want London's recovery to be only for the few. London's recovery has to be for all of us because that is the city we all love and embrace. The measures we are doing are trying to repurpose and reprioritise space so that everybody benefits from this and it is not just focused on one particular demographic, but if we can get as many people walking and cycling as possible, the idea is that that then frees up space for those people who cannot.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Thank you. My final question: specifically, what approaches should be taken for those in outer London who need to travel into the central zone for work or travel on longer orbital routes? Again, I am getting a huge amount of faith group people who live where my friend Keith Prince [AM] lives and come into their church in Westminster. They do not feel they can at the moment with all these additional measures. Could you answer that, please? I will stop there and hand back to the Chair.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** We touched on this a bit when we were talking to Navin [Shah AM] earlier in terms of how we can get people in from outer London into central London. Part of this again - I do not want to rehash everything I have said - is certainly around how we spread the peak and how we stagger start times. Part of this is around urging Londoners to avoid those busy times and wear a mask for those journeys. Part of this is about the range of measures that TfL has introduced to

keep passengers safe on the public transport system with disinfectant, one-way systems, hand sanitiser points and that side of things. Part of it is about other improvements we are trying to make to the bus network by expanding those bus hours so that those become more normal.

Making the space for people to be able to walk and move around central London is absolutely key. I look at some of the medieval street layouts in the city. One of my big fears there is that if you are walking along and you step out to avoid coming into close contact with someone on those busy pavements, you could end up stepping into a busy road. That is why some of the work that we are doing to try to create more pedestrian space in central London is essential to make sure that people do come back.

Talking to employers in central London, they are very supportive of this and would like to see more of it because they need their employees to feel safe. For London more generally, for London to maintain its international competitive advantage, why do people like coming to London? Why do people invest in London? It is because of the workforce and the people who work in London. The utmost priority for employers I speak to at the moment is the safety of their workforce. If they do not feel safe to come into the office, they will not, and so will investment decisions be made for relocating elsewhere? That is why it is so important that we have this ambitious plan to make our streets safer so that people do feel safe coming back into the centre and coming back into workplaces and London continues to thrive as a global city.

**Tony Devenish AM:** Thank you, Chair.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. If I might as we move on to the next question just make a plea for orbital routes in outer London as well because, as we are supporting our town centres to come back economically as well, that is an important area.

I would now like to ask Assembly Member Russell to ask the first of the three questions that she has and she should be able to proceed through all of those three together.

**Caroline Russell AM:** We have TfL now operating under an emergency budget and you have had to pause or cancel everything you can to balance the budget, including a lot of the Healthy Streets projects, but there has been £45 million to allocate to the boroughs, which I understand is fully allocated.

My question is: how has TfL prioritised the Streetspace projects and are the boroughs with better existing provision for walking and cycling, for example, being given greater support because they are in a better position to deliver? That is a question for Will to start with, but I would also be very interested to hear what Julian has to say on it.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** You are right. Due to the fact that the Tube was running throughout this whole process and our whole network was running for key workers during lockdown and the fact that we had a 90% fall in revenue on this, there was the need for the Government's support. As part of that, for this first tranche up until the end of September, most of the existing Healthy Streets schemes were put on pause and that is why the Streetspace programme has come in.

You are right in saying that the total amount of funding as part of the TfL package was £55 million. That was £10 million for TfL and £45 million for boroughs. There was an additional £25 million that was

allocated to London through the DfT of which £5 million has been allocated and another £20 million is in the process of being looked into at the moment.

The £45 million is not enough. We had just under £100 million worth of proposals for schemes as part of that from boroughs. It is wonderful to see that level of ambition and priority coming from colleagues across London. Of the £45 million, we wanted to cover the sunk costs from schemes that had already been committed to, contracts that had already been fulfilled and crucially staff costs in boroughs. The last thing we need during this period is to hollow out London's capacity and the skills of all those borough officers. Of that £45 million about £13 million or £14 million was for those sunk costs and staff contributions to keep that going. £30 million went to the Streetspace plans.

There is the extra £25 million from the DfT and that is now being done jointly with TfL. We have a regular weekly meeting of what is now called the Active Travel Oversight Group. I always forget these acronyms. TfL thrives on acronyms and I need a glossary as part of my daily life. That includes TfL, me, Number 10 and the DfT. What we are doing with the additional DfT money is co-ordinating that through that group. The last thing I want is to create more work for boroughs when they have always submitted some very good schemes and we just do not have the budget to fund it all. That process will be done, co-ordinating through the existing framework and hopefully allocating funds to some of those projects that did not get funding in the first phase.

In terms of how we are prioritising it, as I said, there is much more need for this than there is supply of finance. We are funding over 600 different schemes in the boroughs, a number of liveable neighbourhoods, 400 School Streets and 66-plus cycle routes. In the next four months we are probably going to deliver more cycle routes than the previous mayoral administration in both terms. The scale of what is happening is truly astonishing. We are getting bang for buck.

However, we are having to prioritise where that investment goes and there are a number of things we have been looking at. As you know, I have based a lot of what we are doing on a strategic cycle analysis and a walking analysis, which have shown where there are priority needs. We rapidly redid those for the emergency measures, identifying hotspots. Alison [Moore AM] picked up on some of the radial routes and how we get to town centres but also understanding where the busiest most crowded pavements are. No offence to Alex but TfL computers cannot decide all of this. The boroughs have so much great knowledge from either their brilliant officers or communities themselves. That is why working really closely with them has led to a lot of these schemes coming in.

The way that we selected the bids that came in - and we will continue to use this approach - is to see can these things be delivered? Are they good quality? We have to meet the quality designs. We cannot waste money on stuff that is not good enough. Is it good value for money? Even though there is less of it, it is still public money and we need to get good value. I am totally convinced we are getting good value on it just because of the enormity of what we are being able to deliver with a very small amount of money. Can this be delivered within the agreed timescales? These are emergency temporary measures that will be being delivered up until the autumn. Is it actually feasible and do we all agree that these are feasible to be delivered that way?

Then clearly, while the whole world has changed due to COVID, the physics of the world have not changed. There is still a limited amount of space. There are still a lot of the same problems that we have

had in delivering anything at any point over the last four years. Those things still exist. We still need to balance bus passengers, as I said, and other modes and freight and everything else. We also have to be looking at what impact this has on the broader network. The prioritisation is being done through those lenses. Sorry, I have just gone off on one and I hope I have covered a lot of what you asked.

Then the final piece on this is that a cycle route from nowhere to nowhere does not really lead to some of the changes that we want to see. Part of this is also looking at the existing cycle network and how we can fill in some of the blanks, join up existing routes and improve some of the routes.

Cycle Superhighway 8, for example, was one of the very first cycle routes delivered way before my time. It was essentially a bit of blue paint on a road. That now has been improved to enable people who may be less confident in cycling to start cycling because it now has physical separation. Similarly, there are upgrades to Cycle Superhighway 5 through Lambeth, where maybe it was not meeting quality criteria in the right places. Similarly, Cycle Superhighway 7 from Colliers Wood up to Balham is an upgrade of an existing route.

We have to take in the lens of how we improve this, how we improve that network and how we get the greatest bang for the buck in terms of the greatest potential for people to use this infrastructure.

**Caroline Russell AM:** Thank you. That was massively comprehensive and really very useful. The one question that comes from what you have just said is: what about those boroughs that are not coming forward with the programmes that deliver the good value for money, that are able to be delivered and that deliver that quality standard that provides a proper network? Is anything being done to help those boroughs to produce better bids? Has every borough had some money or are there boroughs that are really struggling to get bids together that will deliver in the way that you need them to deliver at the moment?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** There is a range of reasons why some boroughs are very good at delivering and others are not. It is partly political will, partly the capacity of officers, partly the history of the area and partly the nature of the area, the nature of the populations, the nature of the demographics and the nature of the physical environments they have to operate in.

Every borough now has received something in terms of this programme. When some bids came in that did not meet any quality criteria that we had or were not achieving those priorities, TfL officers have been working with those borough officers to say, "This has not really delivered it. Maybe if you did X, Y and Z. This might be a way of looking at it". I pleased to say that of the six boroughs that we did not initially make any allocations to, five came back and did have significant improvements and so that will be continuing.

On the amount of work that is happening and the credit that both TfL teams and borough teams have in terms of communicating and building this, these are ongoing conversations. I know that, for example, within the bidding process, some boroughs got money for things that they maybe did not want to prioritise and it was difficult for us to know what was prioritised and what was not prioritised when that information necessarily was not being communicated. There are now bilateral conversations going on to make sure that we can iron that out.

There is also now a monitoring system to make sure that what is being delivered meets the quality and is being delivered in the way that the bids propose. I hope that helps.

**Caroline Russell AM:** Julian, you were wanting to come in on that question about how the boroughs are feeling about what they are getting and how this is all working?

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** Yes. From my perspective, with my Ealing hat on, we were a borough that did not get Mini-Holland funding. We just missed out. That has been a point of frustration for me, wanting to go ahead and do these schemes but not having the resources to do it. When this came along, there seemed to be a fantastic opportunity to really push forward and get that funding that we had not had previously.

As Will said, there has been a massive oversubscription of asks from boroughs. We pretty much got just over £1 million but we have schemes that would cost £3 million so there is an awful lot more that we would want to do. There is a perception - and I did not say this at the last Transport and Environment Committee but others did - that some of the non-Mini-Holland boroughs were not getting as much as they had hoped and that the Mini-Holland boroughs seemed to be getting a probably disproportionate whack of this round of funding.

There is always a chance to rectify this in the next £20 million that is going to come in the second round. I understand that certainly with Waltham Forest, they are the leaders, they have shown how this can be done and there is confidence in their bids because they have been there, they have done it, they have shown the political will to do it. You cannot underestimate the importance of political leadership and political will on this. The reactions in terms of some of the low-traffic neighbourhoods are quite politically challenging and people need to show leadership and also hold their nerve in terms of going forward with this. Certainly talking to my other Transport and Environment Committee colleagues, they are determined to do this and to push forward with this. As Will has said, there is a probably unlikely alliance between the Mayor and the Prime Minister on this one. Certainly non-Mini-Holland boroughs would appreciate a bit more in the next round.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Would it be possible to quickly come back on that and give some reassurance on that?

**Caroline Russell AM:** Yes, that would be helpful.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Yes, if you would like to come back on that. We did ask at the last meeting. Is it possible to get the full minutes and papers for the Active Travel Group? It would be helpful in terms of our scrutiny. As you can understand, we are a group of committed enthusiasts on this and it would be helpful if we are able to help those.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** On that one I said before that those minutes are available. I do not know if a request has come in. It certainly has not come to me but I am probably the worse person to ask. If you ask me I will pass that on to my team and they will be able to provide minutes from those meetings.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** I will do that.



**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** On the Mini-Holland piece, one of the things we did want to do was to make sure -- quite a lot within this first phase of stuff that was already in the pipeline to get delivered, which is why some of these schemes that were already in development were thought, "This provides good value, it does provide the need, we can do it in a slightly different way." That is slightly why some of those boroughs got skewed. Other boroughs have done very well. Sadly, I am in a difficult position where everyone is going to be disappointed. There was £100 million worth of applications and £30 million to give out and everybody now dislikes me because not everybody got what they wanted.

The key point here is that there is the next round of DfT money that is available. There is £20 million and we are working through that at the moment. The second piece is that I am in regular discussions with Government on what happens next. The funding package that TfL had runs up until mid-October in terms of that support package. As I have said and as Julian said, this is a shared agenda, and talking through what the nature of what ongoing funding models and further work on this area is something I am certainly talking about and having regular conversations as part of those negotiations. There is this alliance saying that this is a key thing as part of London and the UK's recovery.

**Caroline Russell AM:** In terms of having the sufficient money, obviously the whole pipeline of schemes that you had lined up through Healthy Streets has been paused. At the moment you have had this first tranche of money and then it seems like you are potentially working in six months and then maybe a year and then what on earth comes in the future after that. It is good that you have the alliance between what the Government wants and what the Mayor wants and that feels very constructive, but are you confident that you are going to know how much money you have going forward? Once this pot of money runs out, the current Streetspace allocations, it looks a bit empty going forward.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** It is empty. The whole TfL funding is therefore -- that is why the H1, as it is known, the first half, is covering this period. We cannot make commitments to what goes on in the future beyond that. We have plans. There is an awful lot of stuff, as I said, on the books. We recognise the key role that boroughs have in delivering this but this is obviously subject to the negotiations with Government. There is no other way of looking at this. This is a priority for TfL, this is a priority for the Mayor, this is a priority for the Prime Minister, it is a priority for the Secretary of State. I could not think of a better alignment where everybody is agreed with this, but in terms of absolute numbers that has to be the subject of the negotiations and the final funding arrangement.

To reassure you, the funding arrangement -- we cannot keep on operating on six months, six months by six months by six months. Part of those discussions - as you will be aware of announcements recently - is looking at what is the future for funding arrangements for transport in London, full stop, and this has to be part of those discussions.

**Caroline Russell AM:** Given that you are living month to month at the moment and do not have that long-term continuity and certainty about funding, what about with the dangerous junctions, because that programme has halted? Are you able to put in temporary Streetspace routes to avoid dangerous junctions or to rectify them very quickly at lower cost, a bit like some of the temporary works that you have done at Old Street? Are there ways that you can use this more temporary Streetspace approach to tackle some of

those long-term issues of very dangerous junctions? Otherwise, if we have a pop-up bike lane along a stretch of main road but then it all falls apart at the junction, that does not help to build the network that you were talking about earlier.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** It has been amazing how ingenious engineers both in boroughs and in TfL have been in terms of using temporary measures to address some of those safety concerns. However, you are right. You cannot do every junction and there are routes that we have planned. We cannot do it all in temporary measures because, for example, putting in new traffic signals cannot be done temporarily. That has to be a permanent measure.

Some of the discussions I am having at the moment are around this idea of temporary plus, which is continuing to use different materials, trying to do this stuff fast and providing very good value but then looking at where there are needed to be some permanent changes as part of the schemes that have been in the pipeline that have either been consulted on or will be consulted on and can we use some permanent measures as part of that. That is not the same as the temporary schemes that have been rolled out, that is looking at some of the schemes that have been on the books or are being designed up at the moment. This is a real challenge but in any challenge there is a massive opportunity. Once again, credit to the innovation and the skillsets of everybody across London who are delivering this in a really good way.

**Caroline Russell AM:** Thank you. Finally picking up on the mapping, because it is important that Londoners can see this stuff and know how to use it, you talked about the consultation in future having TfL and borough schemes all on a map together to be able to be consulted on. Is it possible to extend those borough and TfL routes on to the maps that TfL has, the TfL Journey Planner? At the moment, for instance, the Uxbridge Road that is on Julian's screen behind him is not showing on the TfL Journey Planner. Is it possible to get that borough and TfL road coming together on the TfL mapping systems?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** It should be possible; it is taking a bit of time. When you have 860 projects going on in boroughs and I do not know how many projects going on all within a matter of weeks, what usually takes months and years is being delivered in days in weeks. It is fair to say we are playing catch-up with some of the stuff that is going in, and IT systems tend to take a little bit longer to play catch-up. This is a priority and we are working very hard to try to get this right. It is not always perfect.

On the consultations, we still have to carry out separate consultations because the highway authority has to consult in its own way. What I was talking about is the map for engagement that will be including both the TfL and the borough schemes. I hope that will be up online soon and I will let you know when it is.

**Caroline Russell AM:** Thank you. Finally, if I could echo what the Chair said about the minutes of the Active Travel Group. At the moment I am still waiting for lots of answers on Mayor's Questions (MQs) about Streetspace. A lot of what I have learnt has come through from stuff that has been given to journalists. We are the Assembly and we do need to be able to scrutinise what is going on. If I could put in a plea for that information, that would be helpful.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Certainly. We are all working exceptionally hard at the moment and I do not want stuff going out to journalists first but everybody is working flat out at the moment. We will do our best.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you, Assembly Member Russell. I fully accept that a lot of staff are stretched and going flat out. It is helpful, though, to be able to have those. We are, I hope, critical friend partners in this.

Can I put everybody on notice that time is getting away from us because this is a fascinating and brilliant discussion? Can we try to reign ourselves in very slightly to make sure we get through the agenda?

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Picking up from what Assembly Member Russell said, it would be helpful in our follow-up correspondence if you could set out for us, Will, the full monitoring and evaluation that you are planning to put in place as schemes bed in, what level of scheme, what you would expect the boroughs to do. Those are the sorts of questions I am getting from people. They are not sure about the temporary schemes that have come in. Some love them, as you say, some hate them, but how are you going to make that decision, you and the boroughs? If we could get some of that in writing that would be helpful.

Maybe we will start with Alex [Williams] because Will [Norman] has been talking a lot. My first question is: what active measures has TfL implemented to ensure that Londoners with mobility issues and disabled Londoners have access to the new pedestrianised areas of central London?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** I cannot go through the specifics schemes because it does vary so much by each highway authority and locality. Certainly, access for disabled people is a fundamental part in design and is something that we are responding to as we deliver these things. For some of the first round of town-centre schemes where we widened pavements to create more space for social distancing one of the issues was that they were solid and continuous barriers that did often sometimes raise an accessibility issue. One of the things we are looking at is amending the design to make them a bit more permeable to address the concerns. Once you are in it, it was fine and you were protected and felt safe but often you could not get out of it until you reached the end of the road and it was a pointless process. This is a scheme-by-scheme consideration that TfL takes into account and the boroughs take into account but I do think we are changing as we go.

The other area where there is a lot of change is in the City of London. We are shortly to start work on a scheme in Bishopsgate. I know that is one of the issues there about how we reduce the amount of through traffic there but also how we provide adequate access to taxi drivers and private hire vehicles as well and often people who are carrying people with mobility issues so that we make sure that they have access to that area but not as a through route. Therefore, it is a scheme-by-scheme consideration but also the first round of stuff we did maybe did not address it in the way we should have done and we have amended it. It is an evolving picture. I am not sure, Will [Norman], if there is anything else we need to say on that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Could I pick up on the issue you have raised around taxis? They are fully accessible and for some disabled people - not all - they give them access to the city. Are you confirming that the access for taxis to help people with mobility issues is always considered with each of these schemes that you are bringing in?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes, it is. The classic example is Bishopsgate. The way we are looking at adapting that road is it will cease to be a through route for general traffic. It is a through route for buses and cyclists and pedestrians if they choose to do it. However, that is only at certain points on the road. If a taxi is wishing to access the road to drop someone off or pick them up, they can continue to do that. These point interventions are a way of reducing the amount of general through traffic but you still enable and provide access for taxis to get in there, because they clearly need to do that.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Will this be all black taxis, not just electric only, given the huge impact everyone has had? For six months a lot of people have not been able to work? I have read and have raised with the Mayor the issue that some drivers, because they do not have the new electric taxi and they cannot afford the new electric taxi, particularly at the moment, will not have access to certain roads. That seems to me, given where we are, not a good move.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** The only zero-emission-capable (ZEC) taxi restriction I am aware of is Beech Street in the City of London. That is something that they chose to do, their highway authority, as a way of dealing with a very localised, difficult air-quality problem. If you know Beech Street, that is in a tunnel and it has a lot of air-quality concerns. I am not close enough to the Bishopsgate scheme.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I am.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Will might be better placed to answer that than me.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Before I bring Will [Norman] in, generally that is not an issue and you are always making sure black taxis have access?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes, that is the default, yes.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Will [Norman], do you want to come in on that?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Yes, a couple of things. On black taxis in Bishopsgate, that access will be for all black taxis, not just for ZEC only. With all these things we have to keep this under review. I have spoken to David about this and I have spoken to Keith and I have spoken to taxi representatives. I recognise the challenges the trade faces and we certainly need taxi trade as part of London. I want to keep it under review in terms of numbers. If you look at Oxford Street at the moment, for example, which is bus and taxi only, it is one of the most polluted streets in Europe. They have a horrible number of -- I think it is one fatality every year, and that does have restrictions. We need to make sure what we are delivering and we can monitor the numbers to make sure that it can continue to be safe and contribute to the various aims that we have. That is the case.

Alex is right we are looking at this on a scheme-by-scheme basis. As he said, doing stuff at this speed means we do not get everything right and we are going back. We are not proud; when things are not right we are tweaking them and changing them. There is guidance that we have been providing in terms of equalities accessibility. Security is a consideration as well as inclusion on all of these schemes.

To illustrate why this is so important, some of the schemes in terms of widening pavements all look good. You can put ramps in so people with mobility issues can use that and you can put in tactile pavements. However, if you have a bus stop, for example, the very last thing I want to do is to lose the step-free access that most of our bus stops provide for people. If you have a look at the temporary scheme in Brixton and in Park Lane, for example, we have gone to a massive extent to try to keep that. We have widened the kerb. It does not look temporary but it is. If you look at it carefully, they are rubber kerbs and asphalt has filled that space. That continues to allow the bus ramps to go down to provide that step-free access at the critical points. It is that level of detail in each and every scheme that needs to be considered. I am sorry we do not get it right first every time but we are committed to continue to come back and work it. We are providing guidance and we are getting better at this but this is a learning curve that I do not think any of us have been on. We need to both embrace the ambition and make sure that we are doing everything we possibly can to make it accessible for all Londoners.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** I absolutely understand it is unusual times we are in.

The next one, perhaps we will start with Julian on this one. How are training needs for those who are new to cycling or those who have not cycled for many years being catered for to help ensure their safety?

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** There are clearly social distancing issues around how close a cycle instructor can get to somebody. A brand-new cyclist or wannabe cyclist who cannot cycle is not really possible at this point. You are closer than the one metre plus. Those who can cycle but have not done so for a while and are now pulling the bike out of the shed and doing the repairs but do not have the confidence and need some refresher and some road awareness training, that is really, really needed. Previously a lot of our cycle training has gone into schools. That still needs to happen, given we have not talked about the under-18s free travel.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** That is coming.

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** And the issue of trying to get our young people on to bikes. What we need is funding for both school cycle training and also these old cyclists who are coming back, adults who want to cycle again. Will can probably say more about that but I do understand that there is finally, after much toing and froing between DfT and TfL, some funding that will come to the boroughs in terms of cycle training. Clearly it has fallen through the cracks but there is a will on all sides to make sure that we do find some funding for cycle training, because it is critical.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Absolutely. Will [Norman], do you want to clarify what funding is available? I know I had in an MQ that was answered - unlike the many that have not been that Caroline [Russell AM] mentioned earlier - the Bikeability Trust. You were looking at being able to get funding through that, is that right?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** There is definitely a will on this side and we have been working really hard on that. I have always said safe infrastructure is absolutely key to getting people cycling but that is not enough. We have to have some of those proactive measures. Training is absolutely key as well as other behaviour-change programmes to engage people. That is why previously

we had doubled the investment in bike training, similarly in terms of grants to communities. However, as we have said before, the financial situation changed massively due to the COVID crisis and there was no funding in the TfL support package for bike training.

The rest of the country gets funding through the Bikeability Trust directly from the DfT. This is something I have been talking to Government extensively about over the last eight weeks. We are having some extremely positive conversations at the moment. We are just dotting Is and crossing Ts. I hope we are making an announcement imminently to get bike training up and running and sharing money that we hope to have secured among all the boroughs. As Julian [Bell] said, traditionally we have trained both children as well as adults. Kids need to continue to get some of the training, but given the pressures that schools would be under and the massive uptake in bikes coming out of hibernation and new adults cycling, I would imagine there might be a bit of changing that approach to focus a bit more on adults.

I do want to pay tribute. As you know we have invested in the cycling grants over many years for communities and engaging people. People have continued to volunteer in that space over the last few weeks in very difficult circumstances. I know the London Cycling Campaign have introduced a bike buddy system and if people are new to cycling and want to find a route in their local areas, that bike buddy system is working. We are also looking at online cycling tools to help people come back in terms of confidence. I hope going forward that we will have the face-to-face training back up, we will have this bike buddy system that is being done by wonderful volunteers across the city, as well as some online tools to help that. I hope that we will be making an announcement in the coming days.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Lovely, thank you for that. The mayoral answer I had from June does say you are hoping to spend £4 million on delivering --

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** That was certainly what our ask was. That is £2 million less than what we had budgeted and planned for. One asks and one does not always get everything one asks for. We are clarifying the final numbers at the moment.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** I want to bring Nicole [Badstuber] in here. We have surveys that show that the cycling population is not reflective of London as a whole. What help do you think specifically should be given to older people, to women, to others, and what else can be done to get increased levels of cycling?

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** A lot of the things that are being proposed. To reiterate, training is important for unrepresented groups, building up that confidence, especially if you do not have those role models close at hand who are already cycling. The bike buddy system is a good way to partner up people with those who are already knowledgeable, those who are already cycling, with those who are looking to build their confidence. Also a lot of what Will [Norman] has been saying, if you want a functioning network that feels safe for your journey, having strips of paint going nowhere is not going to get people to have that mode shift. Dangerous junctions and addressing them is important, especially for women and ethnic minorities and those groups to encourage them to take up cycling. Yes, of course we have a lot of cyclists who are male, mainly white, often younger, some middle aged. Seeing people like yourself cycling and seeing people cycle in things other than lycra is important.

Low-traffic streets have helped to encourage children to cycle, and to cycle in your local neighbourhoods, and what I alluded to earlier around building these 15- to 20-minute neighbourhoods, accommodating cycling trips or walking trips that feel safe around your local area are also important. Basically, safe networks, having those role models and having people to partner up with to build your confidence and to build up knowledge of routes that are safe and often the quieter routes.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you for that. Finally to Alex [Williams], what is being done to ensure adequate provision of secure cycle parking and storage across London? TfL in the past had an implementation plan. Is that being implemented, is it being revised or is it being increased?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** I do not have the numbers in front of me but we can send them to you separately after this. There has been an increase in cycle parking. In terms of the London Streetspace Programme, this £45 million, I do not think cycle parking is part of that because it is about the rapid delivery of new routes and local traffic neighbourhoods. I will send you an update about where we are in terms of delivery of cycle parking after this.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Will [Norman] has indicated he might know.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** He knows more than me.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I do not know everything on this, but as you know we were very committed to bike parking. Following on from what Nicole said, other things that we do need is that every bike journey needs to start somewhere and stop somewhere and that needs to be secure. I had a bike stolen relatively recently and it is devastating. I know members of this panel have had bikes stolen and it is devastating. I am in the fortunate position that I could get another one through the Cycle To Work Scheme, where many Londoners do not have this option and cannot afford to replace their bikes and that means that people are less like to cycle. This is extremely serious and is a key part of our overall plans. Sadly, with the change in funding again that has been on pause with the rest of the Healthy Streets investment. However, as part of the Streetspace Programme, there has been an investment of 700 new bike spaces in central London on the TfL road network. Those are already going in. The vast majority have gone in now.

The other point that I made earlier is putting more bike parking spaces in those outer London transport hubs, around Underground stations, as part of that, as I responded to a couple of Assembly Members, as part of those longer journeys and cycling to those stations. There are, I think, 280 temporary bike parking spaces being made available at London Underground stations. However, quite frankly, this is not enough. It is scratching the surface. Before the pandemic we estimated there was a need for 23,000 more bike spaces in inner London to cope and 36,000 across all of London. That was from our study. Everything I have seen and with the numbers going up, that will only increase and we are going to have to think more imaginatively about this.

I held a roundtable with the BIDs because this is of everyone's interest. If you have a business and you want cyclists to come in, providing bike parking is definitely the way to do it. Westfield, for example, has turned over huge areas of car parking to bikes, after conversations with them saying, "This is how we can get people in to spend some of those cyclists' pounds." To allow people to make those safe journeys to their high streets and get a bike parking space on their route.

Talking to the BIDs, how do we think about street storage on private land, how can we encourage employers to be thinking about turning over some of the car parking spaces they have to bike parking spaces, not just for customers but for employees. We are working with the NHS, one of London's biggest employers, to improve the bike parking there. We are trying to be as imaginative as possible. With the resources that we have available, we do not have the budget to be able to deliver the bike parking that London needs. That is why everybody has a role to play in this, whether it is boroughs, businesses, across the board. We need to be thinking imaginatively on how we do that. I do not have all the answers. I know some of the numbers but I do not have all the solutions. However, it is amazing, when you start talking to some of the businesses in the improvement areas how keen they are for this. Going back to what I was talking about with Tony [Devenish AM] on Soho, people are cycling into central London and the new West End area, but they need somewhere to lock their bikes that is secure.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you very much.

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** I would add we also need to accommodate parking for people who cannot keep cycles on their private property, people living in flats, people who need to also store it at the end of their journeys, whether that is cycle hoops, secure parking, taking away car parking spaces along routes, but it needs to be catered for at both ends.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much, yes, absolutely. That is a whole other set of questions that we might touch on in the under-18s section.

**Keith Prince AM:** Very quickly, Will [Norman] perhaps we can have a discussion about this offline. Bike security is very important but motorcycles as well. They need to be kept secure. When we put in motorcycle bays, can there be secure fixings for them? That will help to reduce crime as well as help to make it more attractive.

Also, have you considered parking for scooters - and I mean the new electric scooters - because they are coming, whatever way we look at it? It is something you might want to look at for the future.

I have a quick complaint about the removal of two motorcycle parking bays in Tooley Street with nothing being replaced. We can deal with that offline, if you like, to save time.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Let us follow up with all that offline. I am really happy to.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** They are very important questions that, as you say, can be picked up offline.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** I am going to be asking about the Government wanting to suspend under-18s travel. Could I start with Alex and then come to Julian [Bell] afterwards?

Alex, a few confirmatory things to start with, if you would not mind. I understand we now have confirmation that the Government is proposing this only as a temporary measure. Is that correct?



**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** Do we understand what temporary means as far as the Government is concerned?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** No. I am not just giving you one-word answers, but it is saying it is for the duration of the crisis, and clearly none of us know the duration of the crisis. It is saying it is only a temporary measure but there is no statement as to when it will start but also when it will finish either.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** You said earlier that it is a very changing circumstance and we could in a few months be looking at more people on buses and Tubes than we currently have.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes. What you are seeing is a slow but steady return to public transport. We are around 25% on the Tube and two months ago we were around 15% on the Tube. Buses are around 45%. The big uptick that we are all looking to manage is in September, definitely.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** Yes, when schools start. Can I ask about that? There is a significant number of children that would be entitled to free travel anyway under current entitlements. Has TfL done modelling as to how many children you think are not going to be taking the bus to school anymore and will this suspension have an impact on the amount of young people trying to get on to our buses?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** We have done a lot of modelling on this issue. It is probably worth me getting a separate note sent to you on the detailed modelling that is there. The picture on transport choices to schools does vary significantly across London. In central and large parts of inner London the dominant mode to school is by pedestrian, by people walking and a small minority cycling. As you get further out, the bus becomes more and more important for people to get to school and also as you go up the age groups the bus becomes more important. In my old money of the sixth form, the A-level subjects, it is more important because people are going further, so it is quite a complicated position.

Our view is that if there is a removal of the concession it throws up a huge amount of issues about the technical issues about a ticketing system and how that is going to work. There is a process issue because the local authorities are required to consult on this. There is an equalities issue, obviously there are issues there, but there is also a practical administration issue. We will not be administering this, it will be individual schools and academies and local education authorities. I think we are nowhere near in a fit place for any change for September but clearly that is the aspiration to influence something for September.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** We can all hope that that will not happen. London TravelWatch has done a useful survey of young people, as have other youth organisations. Young people are saying that they are worried about the stress on their family finances at a time when families are struggling and on the edge and it is likely to get worse. They are worried about a loss of independence. They are worried about walking to school in certain areas and being the victim of crime, for example. The transport system is seen as a very safe way to get around our city.

There are lots of unintended consequences as well. You may know I chaired a meeting with stakeholders around this with Heidi Alexander [Deputy Mayor for Transport], the Child Poverty Action Group, the Association of Colleges (AoC) and young people themselves. For example, the AoC says that it gets a reduced bursary from the Department for Education (DfE) because there is free travel in London. If this is taken away, it would be having increased funding to it. Therefore, there seem to be lots of unintended consequences to this. Do you get the sense that in your discussions with Government it is waking up to the difficulties of this and it is not as simple as it thought it was?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** The short answer is, yes, it recognises that it is a much more complicated change. It is quite interesting within the funding deal that this relates to, the changing the freedom pass in the morning it was implemented quickly and pretty straightforwardly. The changes to the congestion charge again went through relatively straightforwardly. This is the most complicated condition in the funding deal, in my view. There are layers of complexity that were not understood when that was originally inserted into the deal in the last moment and that is become more and more apparent.

I have read the London TravelWatch report and it is a very good report. One of the key things for me is the DfT is recognising it is a very complicated issue. It has said that it will draft the equalities impact statement. All of those reports that you talk about from Child Poverty Action Group and [London] TravelWatch need to be sent through to the DfT so that it does formulate an equalities impact assessment that genuinely addresses all of those or at least understands and recognises all of those issues before a decision is made. It was a very good report that [London] TravelWatch put out.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** Thank you. I am going to ask Julian [Bell] a question and then come back to you Alex [Williams], if I can.

Julian, from a local authority point of view can you briefly explain what the suspension of travel for young people would mean to the young people that you serve?

Secondly, from an administrative point of view, are local authorities set up to be administering the free-travel requirements that would be required under this? Presumably, you have the data as to who would be entitled to free travel or not.

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** Clearly, if the Government's aspiration to implement this in September were the case, it is virtually impossible for boroughs to do what would need to be done in that timescale. The statutory duty to provide free travel for primary-aged children living over two miles away from their school or for high-school children over three miles away falls on local authorities. We would have to deal with this if that is what happens and this goes ahead, because that statutory duty to provide for those groups still exists.

All boroughs have been asked to do a survey of our schoolchildren and ask them how they plan to travel to school in September. However, this has been asked us in July, essentially, just weeks before schools break up. Again, it has been very difficult to get a meaningful consultation or survey of our schoolchildren. Of course, most of our schoolchildren are not coming into school at the moment. You only have limited

numbers of schoolchildren who are actually attending school at the moment and that is a virtually impossible scenario there.

However, armed with the information that we have managed to glean, clearly the dependence on public transport of kids getting to school is still significant and we want to do everything we can to try to get them walking and cycling and as boroughs we will push that message out as much as we possibly can. I have already written to all parents talking about all the things that they need to do to prepare for their children coming back in September, and Active Travel was part of that message, but also the uncertainty over what is happening makes it very difficult for any of us to plan. We are between a rock and a hard place as local authorities. You say that we have the data but, with it being August, it will be difficult.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** Yes, virtually impossible. Alex, if I can come back to you, it does seem that this is a ridiculous thing to ask, given the technical and difficult challenges, if this is to be a temporary measure. If I can also ask you, earlier on you talked about redistributing buses from inner to outer London, particularly around those start times and for certain routes that may be overcrowded with schoolchildren. Can you give a bit more detail about that? Are you also looking at perhaps buying in some coaches if there is a real issue on certain routes?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** What we have done is we have done an analysis of the bus network and identified 66 schools in London. There are 3,100 schools in London and we have identified 66 schools, all secondary schools in outer London, where we think there is a good chance that the bus network will struggle when the schools return in September. That is because they are schools with high levels of bus usage or they are in areas where there are clusters of secondary schools and we know that there are peaks happening there at the moment.

What we have done is we have contacted all of those 66 schools and we are in a regular dialogue with them. We are asking them to look at the issue about staggering their start and finish times. Staggering it by half an hour - we are not talking about a massive amount and only going in the morning or in the afternoons, just a half-hour shift in some year groups at the start of a school day and at the end of the school day - could make a big difference about how you manage the peak periods at the start and end of the school day. Certainly, at the end it is an intense half an hour, 45 minutes or hour or whatever and if you spread that a bit it makes a big difference. We are in a big dialogue with the top 66, as it were. We are also sending out travel advice to all 3,100 and we have a bespoke webpage on our site to highlight the travel advices they should take, which is what Julian has referred to: walk and cycle or looking at different staggered time. If you are out and about and people are using the bus network at peak time, it might take a bit longer.

The other thing we are going to do is this advice is going out to schools towards the end of term and we will repeat that messaging at the end of August or early September. To give you an example, my own son is waiting on his GCSEs. He does not know what secondary school he is going to go to and he does not know whether he is going to be walking to school or getting a bus to school because he does not know. Therefore, we have to reissue that advice to the new cohort of students when they know where they are going.

The other thing it is probably worth finishing off is that we are looking at the issue of coaches but they will have a limited value. The area we are examining is what is the carrying capacity of a bus. At the moment

it has 30 on a double-decker and 15 on a single-decker. One of the things we are looking at with health experts is for school peaks do we look at different ways of managing that bus network for those school peaks, because up on the top deck is school kids only at the start and end of the school day. We are looking at that issue and working with health advisers as to whether we need to think about a different way of managing the bus network for that September return.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** That is positive that you are doing that work. Representing outer London boroughs and my own child going to a sixth-form college, I am pleased to report they have put their start time back half an hour for one year group and 45 minutes for another; that message seems to be getting through.

My last question is about the School Streets scheme. I know that message went out from TfL to schools asking them to contact their local authorities and to bid for some of this money that was available. How is that going and have you had a positive reaction to that?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes, we have. Do you have the numbers, Will [Norman]? You are the numbers man.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Yes, we have had a really positive response to this. School Streets, as you know, Joanne, were something that some boroughs were beginning to embrace before all this happened. I look at my kids' school when I do drop-off and the crowded space around the entrances to primary schools, particularly if you have traffic moving past, I live in complete fear of. My kids have "two metres" lodged in their heads now like they have no tomorrow. "I have to stay two metres apart from people." This is all we have been talking about for the last three months. What I do not want them doing is walking to school and then stepping out when they see someone coming towards them. It is just not worth thinking about. The idea of having timed closures around certain schools to make it safe for people to socially distance around these very, very busy places that have kids, teachers, staff and parents all coming in, and siblings and everything else, makes a huge amount of sense to me. It cannot be done in every site but we are encouraging it.

Thanks to your team and colleagues across the board for helping to write about this. There has been quite a lot of press on this. The response has been really good. We have now funded over 400 different School Streets schemes across London. There is more appetite to do more. I have been talking to boroughs who want to make this the default. Unless there is a good reason why you do not do a school street, it is the new way. It is not particularly expensive in most cases but the benefits are not just for the social distancing and the COVID piece. We know that where it has happened it has cleaned up air quality around schools, and the very last thing we want is our kids breathing in toxic air.

Also in terms of coming back to the point around the wider public health benefits. I went to visit a school with a School Street in Greenwich before this happened. It had seen a 54% fall in the number of people driving and that directly corresponded to people walking and cycling and scooting more. Kids seem to like scooters rather than bikes, because they are in local areas. This is great. In London 80% of kids are inactive. We have to get people more active to tackle the inactivity crisis that we face. That will help keep us fit and healthy to manage the ongoing challenges with the pandemic and other chronic disease issues. I am really pleased and this is a positive step. As more schools see how this works, I can imagine this

becoming a widespread thing. It is phenomenal news and I hope this is a small silver lining out of a very, very dark cloud.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** Thank you, that is really heartening. Thank you, Chair.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much, Assembly Member McCartney. I have indications for three follow-ups but I would like to reflect that one of the things I learnt very, very early on in my time as an elected representative was the real issue around pollution first thing in the morning and how much that very affects schools and school streets. I appreciate the difference that will make.

**Caroline Russell AM:** . Very briefly two points. I have heard about parents getting letters from schools about not bringing scooters and bikes to store in the school playground because the schools are worried about the physical space. Can TfL do some messaging for schools to make sure that pupils are encouraged to scoot and cycle to school?

The other thing is about the secondary-age young people, whether or not they get their free travel back. With the capacity issues on public transport, surely it makes sense to be doing some cycle training for these groups so that they get tailored help to work out a route from their home to get to their school safely. With all the Streetspace measures that are taking place in London, we ought to be able to get to a point where 16- and 17-year-olds can cycle safely to school and that we do everything we can to enable them to do it. If it is possible for the cycle training work that TfL is supporting to include tailored cycle training for that cohort, particularly the sixth-formers so they can cycle to school, that would be absolutely amazing. Do you have any thoughts on that?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Cycling to school is hugely important. Taking away the free travel for under-18s is not the way to do that, but it is about supporting people to do that and providing these opportunities. Cycle training is provided through the boroughs. As I said before, there is a role for cycle training for schools and I hope that that will include this because I share your ambition. I hope that we are able to get most people to be able to have a safe route to school and allow that to be part of everyday life.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you.

**Caroline Russell AM:** Could I check if Julian [Bell] has anything to say from the borough perspective on that issue of cycle training, particularly for sixth-formers, so they can be independent about cycling to school?

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** I absolutely agree. We need the funding to be able to do it. There is also a question about the availability of bikes for secondary school students as well. We need to think about how we can get more bikes to them too.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Absolutely, and also storage space in flatted developments and a whole range of other things. That is an ongoing point to be made. Thank you.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** A quick one to Julian [Bell] and maybe Will [Norman] as well. Julian [Bell], what work has been done to let children who have free school meals and who live the required distance away from school know that they will still be getting free travel?

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** That is the group that we want to talk to. As I have said, from my borough's perspective we have been sending out messages to all of our pupils, but there is this hiatus and not quite knowing what is going to happen. We have said, "We will update you when we know more." Until we have some certainty, it is very difficult to give any clear messages to people other than that there is an issue and we will try to deal with it when we have some certainty.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** Does the current proposal not say that these groups of children will continue to receive free travel? That feels very clear to me, whereas having a hiatus and not communicating that can cause confusion. For a different group of children there is, I accept, an uncertainty but for a particular group of children you have certainty, the group of children whose parents will need to know most. Has anybody taken that into account in their communications?

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** Absolutely we have. We have given that message, but again we do not quite know how this is going to work. You have to have a system in place to administer the mechanism for allowing those children who qualify for the free travel. That is the bit that we do not have the answer to. We know that there are children who are going to be continuing to qualify for it but we do not have the mechanism to deliver a pass that says, "Here you go, here's your free travel."

**Shaun Bailey AM:** Thank you for your answer, Julian [Bell]. Will [Norman], I would like to hear what you have to say, but it seems to me that that the message is, "You will continue" - you used the word 'continue' - "to receive free travel". How that happens you could then talk about later. That message feels very useful because I work with a number of people for whom free travel is very important to them and their child for umpteen different reasons. They believe that they are not going to receive free travel when we all know they are going to and I believe it would be a kindness to let those people know that that is going to continue. Will [Norman].

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Yes. I was just going to add that I think we are waiting for more clarity from Government on how this is going to be done and who is eligible for free travel under the new proposal. The equalities and impact assessment, as I said, is being done by the DfT, but there is a real challenge that if you send out a message saying, "You will be getting free travel", it implies that everyone who does not receive that, then they will not be getting it, so it could add to further confusion. I really echo the point that without that clarity from Government, it is very difficult to do this communication. I am particularly worried around people who probably need to return to education the most facing the biggest barriers in accessing it.

Further, 17- and 18-year-olds who have chosen colleges - I am thinking of Alex's [Williams] son and other people who maybe have got colleges in different boroughs - they could end up paying multiple adult fares under what I understand to be the proposals at the moment. Those people who need the education most could be hit hardest and really restrict opportunities, so there is an awful lot of worry about this. There is not a lot of clarity and doing communications without the clarity could risk making it even more confusing

to the poor people who are worried about it. I agree with you that there is an urgent need to understand this and get to a conclusion.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** I agree with you, Will [Norman]. The clarity is important, but there seems to be a strong communication around the fact that some people may well have this subsidy removed and absolutely no communication around the most vulnerable people, who will not have that removed. That is why I asked the question.

My other question to you, Will [Norman], would be: if the temporary removal of this concession goes ahead, what other work is being done to provide some kind of alternative? Is that possible? Is it possible for the Mayor to provide some kind of alternative? Has any thinking been done around that?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** I am not an expert in this, but as somebody said earlier, this is so horribly complex and this is something that we have never done in London. In every local authority, every school, the number of people who are on free school meals changes, people who are on universal benefits change. This is a whole new system that London has never had to deal with because we have had an existing system that works very well and works well for our children. Just the complexity of bringing in a whole new fare structure during the school holidays for a temporary measure, I can really understand why this is the Mayor's view that this is not the right thing to do at the moment, but Alex [Williams] might know more details on that and Joanne [McCartney AM] has her hand up as well.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** I will bring Joanne in in a minute, but from my perspective, it just illustrates that the whole process was ill thought through and is largely unworkable. If I might bring Assembly Member McCartney in and then Assembly Member Shah and then we must move on, important as all of this is.

**Joanne McCartney AM:** It was just to clarify the point that Shaun made. At the moment, the Government is looking at children and young people in different age brackets, so you cannot give a blanket message about free school meals and who will be entitled because different age groups will be affected differently, which adds to the complication.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** I might also add that families' individual circumstances will be changing with the ending of the furlough scheme through August. You may well find that there are families who have to move on to Universal Credit and therefore will become eligible. It is hugely complex.

**Navin Shah AM:** Alex [Williams], the Government has been encouraging people to use public transport, but like under-18s, there is also temporary suspension of the 60+ Freedom Pass for the morning hours. Again, we do not know when the suspension is until. I do not know if you have any update, because Age UK and many other stakeholder organisations are campaigning against this discriminatory suspension. Can you tell us how long this suspension is likely to continue?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** The short answer is no. It came into effect for the morning peak only, 9.30am, in mid-June. It is one of these kind of temporary changes with no fixed end date. It does really depend on how the pandemic continues and how long social distancing rules are required on our network. It was introduced relatively straightforwardly from a systems perspective. I get that there were other issues with it, but it was issued quite quickly. It has had an effect,

I have to say, and we have been tracking the usage of the Freedom Passes and other concessions and it does seem to be that people have complied with it and shifted their journey to later in the day. I know it is sometimes difficult if you have got a hospital appointment and things like that for that early morning shift, but it does seem to have had an effect and more straightforward. The under-18s, as I have said before, it is just layers of complexity that are still being worked through and we do not have a product at the moment.

**Navin Shah AM:** Yes, the problem clearly is that as you will hear from Age UK in their campaign, very, very clearly this is discriminatory, there are negative effects from this morning peak time suspension. Quite frankly, there needs to be clarity as to when this will be lifted and whatever we can do to get this information from whatever source of Government. We need to have that because you are locking out another section of vulnerable people who need that freedom to travel. We are having a two-tier system here. At one level we are saying, "Use public transport" but then we are telling another section of people who are vulnerable that, "No, you cannot travel during peak hours." It is not fair.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** I hear you loud and clear. Yes, thank you.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much for that. Nicole [Badstuber] would like to say something and then we really must move on to the final section.

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** Yes, I just wanted to make a few quick remarks. The concessionary bus passes were introduced primarily to tackle social exclusion and to encourage social mobility, to improve access to opportunities and education. I think in the last chats that we have had here, a lot of it is only focused on access to schools, but of course young adults, youths, benefit hugely from the opportunities that they can reach within London other than just education. That will improve or hinder their prospects going forward long term and it will allow them to access part-time jobs to help and support their family. The loss of that will be a huge loss of independence for them. Also, if we are thinking about the transport system as a whole, the loss of free passes for kids, it will have knock-on effects for the transport system. You might, for instance, opt to use the car because now it is not free for you anymore to have your kids ride on the bus. This in turn will of course lead to more traffic and more pollution. It has wider implications is all I am trying to point out here and the opportunities are not exclusive to education.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Absolutely, and it is education in the widest context for those who start very often with the playing field definitely stacked against them. As a former Mayor once said, London is a wonderful place if you can afford to get to all those things that are now free like museums and whatever else, but actually lots of other activities, leadership skills, lots of different things. Thank you very much for that intervention.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** What are the implications of COVID-19 on the future transport planning? How have any short term, medium or long-term changes in demand as a result of the COVID-19 crisis been factored into future transport planning? We will start with Alex [Williams] and go from there.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Thank you, Shaun [Bailey AM]. That is the million-dollar question, is it not, really?



**Shaun Bailey AM:** Yes, it is.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** We are very much alive to that issue and we are looking at a range of scenarios about what it could mean for the city and what it could mean for transport in the city. If you look at historical changes in our network, 7/7 had a big impact, but it was quite short and temporary. For 2012 it was a significant impact, but it was three weeks and we were back to normal. This is much longer, this is four months, probably longer. This is the first time I have worn a tie in four months. It is a big change in people's travel behaviours and their working lives, really, and there is a real case to be made to say that this could have a longer lasting and more profound effect on the city, how it develops, its scale of growth and also the transport infrastructure and the transport services that we need to provide for it.

We have done a lot of work on what we call scenario planning. We have looked at five scenarios about what it could mean for the city. The most straightforward one is a kind of business as usual return and quick bounce-back to what it could be. There is another set of scenarios we are looking at. One is called low-carbon localism, and I think Nicole [Badstuber] referred to this issue about the 15-minute city. It is this thing about the outer London high streets feel very busy but central London feels very quiet. It could be we are seeing more localism positions in the city and a local way of living. It could be into a more remote way of living. It could mean that the commuter belt becomes even further afield and people commute less but further. Then there are other riskier ones about we get less investment in London and London declines to a degree or it could go the other way, about London becoming bigger and a stronger kind of urbanisation agenda.

We have five scenarios and we have a paper going to the [TfL] Board next week - which has just been published last night - on this issue. We have done an overview about the Mayor's Transport Strategy and it summarises those five. What we are doing is looking at our long-term capital planning through the lens of each of those five scenarios really and just saying that if we are looking at a low-carbon localism agenda and that is the way that this city develops, what does it mean for what we provide for the bus network, what does it mean for walking and cycling, what does it mean for those big new rail projects we are looking at? I think we are at a very interesting point of time but, as I say, we are thinking and I am looking at that horizon-scanning exercise to think about what does it mean for the city and how do we need to structure ourselves, but also how we need to think about what are the next round of investments and way of delivering our services going forward.

I will put a plug to the Mayor's Transport Strategy update report that goes to the Board next week. At the back it has got a summary of that kind of scenario planning analysis that we have done, but it is really interesting work at the moment.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** It sounds like it. I know myself and my colleagues will be very interested in that because London is growing, but its shape changing will be important as to how we move forward.

Let me take a bit of a turn and go somewhere else. Road pricing is often talked about in London. How has the COVID-19 crisis affected your study into road pricing and what that might look like?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** The Mayor's Transport Strategy is still as it was pre-COVID. There is a policy in there to say that we will be looking at distance-based charging and that policy remains. The focus in the pandemic has been on that issue about restarting the Congestion Charge on 18 May and extending it in terms of time and days on 22 June. Those changes are temporary and one of the things we need to look at, a bit like the other changes we have talked about, is what are the things that we need to consider - probably next year, I suspect - about what elements of those are made permanent or do we go back to the way the scheme operated before? That is probably the most immediate issue to look at from a road user charging perspective.

We still are pressing on with the Low Emission Zone, which is probably going to come in in March next year, and we are still progressing with the ULEZ extension to North and South Circulars for October next year. Beyond that, there is not a defined scheme as such to work through. It is very much dependent on next year's mayoral election, as we know.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** Yes, sure. Given the long-term financial challenges facing TfL, are you anticipating a much scaled-down capital programme that primarily focuses on maintaining the existing network or will you still be having a big ambitious plan to grow and add new bits to our network?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** We will have to reconsider the capital programme in light of the crisis. It is quite interesting: Will [Norman] has talked a lot about the walking and cycling initiatives that have been delivered and there is a big challenge about the cost of making some of those permanent. That probably means potentially more money in that area than we have looked at before really, but in terms of how we position ourselves for the next funding deal with Government and also the Comprehensive Spending Review, we need to have a credible long-term capital plan and funding settlement with it. That is part of the discussions with Government on that, because one of the kind of truisms for all of these scenarios we are looking at is London is highly likely to continue to grow. We are the fastest-growing region in the United Kingdom (UK) at the moment and that growth will put more pressure on our network.

We need to have a credible investment strategy for this city. I get the whole levelling-up agenda, but that does not mean about levelling down London, that means about investing elsewhere, but it also means that you need a credible investment strategy for central London. We are cognisant of that for the funding settlement for H2, the next operating round. We are also mindful of the Chancellor's announcement yesterday on the Comprehensive Spending Review and we will be pushing our agenda there, particularly on the issue about decarbonisation, but I think it is quite clear that we need a credible long-term funding settlement that deals with the capital budgets going forward. It might mean that some of them, like Crossrail 2 or Bakerloo, take longer to deliver, but it does not mean to say you abandon them. They are still important projects for this city, which is growing.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** How are you going to manage this movement - Will [Norman] may have a comment to make here - from projects that were temporary into being permanent? Will there be additional capital costs there? Will might want to say something about how you manage the relationship with the public because the idea that you give something space because it is temporary is very different to if you knew it was going to be permanent, would it not? You have a very different conversation. How is that going to be managed from a financial point of view and also from a trust point of view? A resident said to me,

“Possession is nine-tenths of the law”. Once you put something in, it is very hard to undo it, even if it is terrible. How are we going to manage that?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** The key thing at the moment is to monitor and understand the effect of what has gone in now in terms of those temporary measures, the low traffic neighbourhoods or the cycle schemes. You are monitoring in terms of traffic impacts and usage levels, but also what people think of it. We are collating all the views and all the letters, some positive, some negative, about the schemes in there so that when you do make that decision about whether they are permanent, you probably might need to go through another process in terms of consultation, but it is informed by the reality about what was the effect of it in a temporary state, but there is a real challenge in switching from temporary to permanent in that permanent costs you a lot more than temporary. That is one of the challenges we have got for the next funding round, but Will has alluded to this before. Where you have this alliance between the Mayor and the Prime Minister and No 10 saying they want these kinds of initiatives there, we need to use that to make sure that we get a decent funding settlement for the next funding round. I do not know, Will [Norman], if you want to add something to that.

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** We talked a bit about the consultation, the engagement, having those online resources, making sure that we are collating that feedback. Some of the schemes that are going in are existing schemes that have been consulted on and are being delivered, which they might be being delivered at the moment in temporary materials and at three times, four times, five times the speed. The thing then will be looking at how much money we have got and how we go back to make some of those permanent. I touched on earlier, Shaun [Bailey AM], this idea of temporary plus. The idea that we are going to suddenly have the money to go back and do everything that we wanted to do and everything that is consulted on and everything is out there in York stone and it is gold-plated and looks phenomenal, that is just not the financial reality at the moment.

We are going to have to look at it from: what are the priorities; what are the safety priorities in making some of this permanent; are there sections of this that can be done permanently to make them safe and to make them work and to make them work better for everybody in the area? As you know, if you cannot get the traffic signals right in some schemes or there need to be changes to some of that infrastructure that will help alleviate neighbouring traffic and congestion and other things. We are going to have to look at it scheme by scheme and see what sections of this can be done permanently first to improve the scheme and then are there other things that we could come back to? Maybe, for example, the wands that are sitting behind Julian [Bell], is that something that we could leave in place for a bit longer, rather than to redo all the drainage, all the cabling, all the kerbs and everything else that might need to go in to make a scheme like that permanent? We are going to have to look at it on a scheme-by-scheme basis and again think differently. We are going to be in a very different world financially, we are going to be in a very different world in terms of demand and what is needed from the public.

**Shaun Bailey AM:** OK, thank you.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** That is very helpful. Assembly Member Prince, you wanted to come in briefly.

**Keith Prince AM:** Very quickly, thank you, Chair. Really a question for Alex [Williams]. Clearly, just to let you know that here in East London we are very much opposed to the expansion of the ULEZ, but the

point I wanted to make was that I understand and in some respects support the need for modal shift in London from the car to other forms of transport, such as cycling, walking - motorcycles, of course - taxis, but in the outer London boroughs, especially boroughs like Redbridge, more so even in Havering, which is a very large borough, but it does not have that connectivity. Shaun [Bailey AM] can confirm that, it does not have that connectivity, especially north to south that you would have in central London. There needs to be a recognition of that. You did mention earlier about buses not being so busy in the centre, so is there any chance we could have some out in the outer London boroughs?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** That is something we are actively looking at, is there an opportunity to redistribute some of the supply but, as I say, at the moment the focus is very much on those 66 hotspot schools where we are fairly confident there is going to be a problem that needs to be addressed when schools return. That is the priority at the moment, looking at additional supply in that area. I am well aware of the challenges in boroughs like Havering and I have been in contact with the chief executive there a few times on that very issue about north-south or orbital connectivity. Our challenge, I think, going forward into our capital settlement is how we get the money in to address those kinds of challenges in outer London, where it is harder to get the money from developers and other sources to get the infrastructure in, but clearly there is a need for that kind of stuff.

**Keith Prince AM:** OK. I will leave it there, Chair.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. I could not agree more with that, as somebody who comes from Barnet. I recognise the challenge there, but there are opportunities in that as well. If I can now move on, Assembly Member Pidgeon has the next two questions.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Some of it has been covered. The message from Government, Alex, has changed really in the last week or so, rather than just being essential journeys to being, "You should travel now". Given Julian Bell mentioned earlier about the night-time economy and how important that is to London, are there plans to reintroduce the Night Tube?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Not at the moment, no. That is something that we will have to take stock on when we are clearer about when the night-time economy gets going, when theatres and concert halls get going. At the moment, the night bus network continues to function. It has functioned during the pandemic. We are not aware of any problems with that bus network. As you know, a large number of people who use it are going to and from work and that continues to be the case, but at the moment I think the priority for those train drivers who were on the Night Tube is to provide that extra capacity on the daytime Tube to get up to the levels that we need.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Thank you for that. We talked earlier about hotspots and how you are publicising particular interchange stations in other areas and also hours of the day you talked about on the network where it is busier. Are you looking, perhaps in September as schools reopen, at promoting where there are hotspots on the bus network in order for people to make that informed decision, "I will stay at home for another half hour before going out", or, "I am going to get on my bike or walk so I do not have that huge contact with people"? Is that something you are considering or will you consider?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** We are considering that issue. That is a really important point because we know that there are certain times of the day where the buses will become very well-used by schoolchildren going to and from school, even with staggering. One of the ways to address that pressure is advice to non-schoolchildren passengers that actually it might be better to use the network at a different time. We are certainly looking at that issue and one of the things we need to look at is about how we target that. In some parts plainly it does not matter, but in outer London, particularly around those 66 that I referred to several times, that is something that we are looking at, yes.

**Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM (Deputy Chair):** Lovely, thank you very much.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. If I might just pick up very briefly the comment about the night bus, have you seen increased pressure on night bus services as the hospitality industry begins to restart? In the absence of those Night Tube services, as that hospitality industry goes back into action, how are you going to maintain safe physical distanced night bus services?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** We are not aware of any substantial pressure on the night bus network at all. What we are seeing is a reduction in flows there, because basically most of the night bus network is made up of probably the majority of people going to work and people going to and from an event. Clearly all of those people going to and from an event are not on the bus anymore and so social distancing is not a problem on the night bus network, as far as I am aware at all.

One of the interesting things about the hospitality trade is it does feel pretty slow at the moment in terms of if you go to central London, not all of these establishments have reopened. That goes back to a point I made earlier. Part of the reason for that is they are reliant on office workers in that locality going to use the restaurant or the pub and things like that, so they are struggling. In some ways it might make more economic sense to take advantage of furlough and the business rates and be shut rather than open with very low levels of takings. It does feel as though that might well change in the autumn, but at the moment there are no significant pressures on the night bus network that I am aware of.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you, that is very helpful.

**Navin Shah AM:** Alex [Williams], as everyone appreciates, the Elizabeth line is very important for Londoners. Last month, Tony Meggs [Chairman, Crossrail Ltd] said his team would meet or beat the summer 2021 opening date for the central section of the Elizabeth line to open. Will it be open in time to contribute to the pandemic response? Any comments, Alex [Williams]?

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** I can say that the team is working flat out to make sure that is the case. The other thing that is probably worth noting is that there is a Crossrail Board this week - I cannot remember if it is tomorrow or Friday - and that will provide an update. It will also go to the TfL Board next week in the public domain about where they are on the scheme and the progress they are making towards the delivery and opening.

The other thing that is probably worth mentioning is that I have a new boss here, the new Commissioner [of Transport for London], Andy Byford, and I can assure you he completely gets that opening Crossrail as soon as possible is one of his top two priorities for this organisation. I can assure you he is going to be

looking at the challenge with some vigour and energy and will want to make sure that we get that project open as quickly as we possibly can but, as I say, there will be further public statements on it this week or next week at the TfL Board.

**Navin Shah AM:** I appreciate that both the Mayor and the new Commissioner are committed to this project and it is a priority. The question is there is still so much uncertainty. Tony Meggs very clearly made this comment last month, but now we are hearing that this actually may not happen. It is very important in terms of recovery for London that the Elizabeth line is open as soon as possible and we need clarity as to what is the new opening date. That is something we would like to know, we would like to be clarified. If you can take the message back and let us know as soon as possible when the Board has met etc what is the current timing for the central section to open.

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** OK, I will do, yes.

**Navin Shah AM:** Please. Thank you very much.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** I had one final question. The likely answer is that it will be going to the update to the Board next week, but what are the implications of the COVID-19 pandemic for the delivery of the Mayor's Transport Strategy? That question was addressed to everyone and so it is an opportunity for all four of you to have your final word today before I thank you for a very interesting and full session. We would like to start with Alex [Williams].

**Alex Williams (Director of City Planning, Transport for London):** Yes. There is a comprehensive report going to the Board next Wednesday - it is in the public domain now - which answers that question, really. We had been, pre-pandemic, making good progress on the delivery of the Mayor's Transport Strategy objectives and the Environment Strategy. Clearly there are the risks with the pandemic about it being a car-led recovery and the report looks at that in some detail about what we need to do as a result of that. I will make sure that you get a copy of that report after this meeting.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** That would be very good, thank you. Julian [Bell], do you have any comments about that?

**Julian Bell (Chair, Transport and Environment Committee, London Councils):** The emphasis on active travel for me is the real focus in recovering from COVID and so more walking and cycling and putting that infrastructure in. The reason we chose those wands that are behind me was with half an eye on making those permanent and allowing that cycling infrastructure to be there long term. We have not really talked about the climate emergency today, but that is still right there front and centre, as well as recovery from COVID. Active travel has so many aspects about it which address both of those issues.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you. I could not agree more. The way Nicole [Badstuber] smiled, I think she would probably like to say something in her final remarks about that.

**Nicole Badstuber (Researcher, University College London and the University of Westminster):** Yes. The core of the transport vision is still there. What the COVID crisis really just highlights is the need to act fast to shift to that headline of 80% of all trips being by sustainable mode. The thing I would like to

emphasise is that it needs to be a just and inclusive transport future that is focused on people and is environmentally sustainable.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Yes, thank you very much. Will [Norman], final comments from you?

**Dr Will Norman (Walking and Cycling Commissioner):** Colleagues have covered a bit of this, but what this has shown is that we can act fast, we can deal with crises across London and we can act very fast to deal with that. As I said earlier, we cannot come out of this crisis by sowing the seeds of the next, whether that is an inactivity crisis and chronic disease, whether that is an air quality crisis and coming out of a car-based recovery. As Julian [Bell] said, we have a big wave coming towards us with the climate emergency and I think this shows that when people work together and we have a shared challenge, we can achieve an awful lot in a very short period of time. Londoners have pulled together amazingly well to manage the really hard sort of challenges with lockdown, all the problems that are coming and I take great confidence from that.

I have been inspired by so many people who have really gone out of their way or are really struggling in difficult times. Again, I just want to say a big thank you to colleagues at TfL who have been delivering, borough officers and engineers around the city, the councillors, Assembly Members, who have been hugely supportive in all of this, the campaign organisations, but above all the communities in London, who have shown a degree of resilience, innovation and excitement around change. I really hope, as I said before, there are some silver linings to this dark cloud. One of them is it shows just what a great city we live in and what great people live here and how we can respond to a crisis, which gives me great hope for the future.

**Dr Alison Moore AM (Chair):** Thank you very much. As somebody who is a glass-half-full girl, I have to say I really appreciate that upbeat and positive last set of comments because you are absolutely right. This has revealed all sorts of strengths in people and organisations. Thank you very much for an illuminating and dynamic discussion. All four of you, thanks for coming along and spending your time, but also sharing your thoughts with us. Thank you very much.