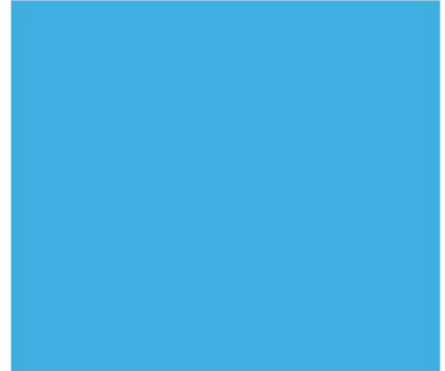


HIT AND RUN: THE ESCALATING CRISIS ON LONDON ROADS



A report by Caroline Russell AM
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January 2024



City Hall Green
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INTRODUCTION

“Far too many people still die or sustain horrendous injuries on London’s roads”.

That was the opening line to a report by former London Assembly Member Jenny Jones, back in 2007.¹

Sadly, it is still true 16 years later.

In 2016 my colleague on the Assembly, Siân Berry, also did a report on what she called the “unacceptable epidemic” of hit and run in London.²

This apparent increase in irresponsible and dangerous driving on our roads is very worrying.

This report continues the work examining the danger on London’s roads and calling on the Mayor, the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and Transport for London (TfL) take it seriously, make changes to keep people safe, and reduce danger on London’s roads.

In 2021 there were nearly two and a half times as many hit and run casualties on London’s roads as there were in 2009.

Not stopping after a collision seems to be almost normalised and the people that do it appear not to care about their victims or to fear any legal consequences.

In my colleague Siân Berry’s 2016 hit and run report, she found that **across London hit and runs had increased by 40 per cent between 2011 and 2015.**³

Data recording techniques seem to have changed since 2015, but whether comparing from either 2017 or 2018 to the current year,

hit and run casualties across London have again increased - by nearly five per cent since 2018, and by nearly 14 per cent since 2017.

This is why the Mayor’s Vision Zero target exists. The sheer number of hit and run casualties is concerning. In 2021 there were 7,708 hit and run casualties recorded. **The equivalent of more than 21 a day in London.**

When limiting to just serious casualties and fatalities the number is still 773, the equivalent of more than two a day.

That’s two Londoners every day whose family is devastated by trauma, injury or in the worst cases the death of a loved one.

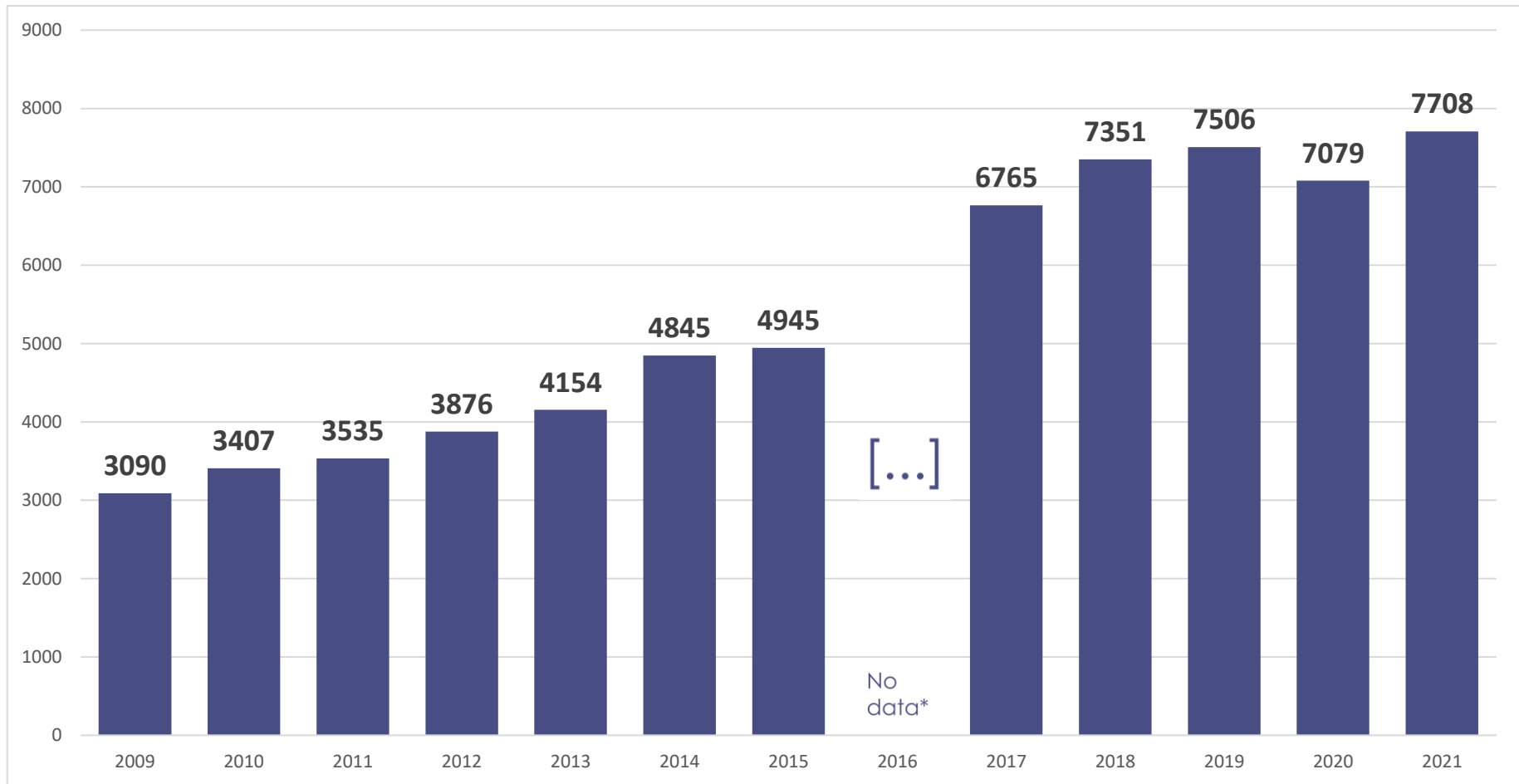
It should be neither inevitable nor acceptable that so many people are killed and seriously injured on London’s roads by people who fail to stop. Every Londoner should be able to pick up their child from school, pop out to the shops for a pint of milk and get home safely.



Caroline Russell AM
January 2024



Figure 1: London-wide hit and run casualties 2009-2021



*Note: Data was not provided by the Mayor for 2016 due to a change in the system used by the MPS.⁴

Figure 2: Hit and run casualty data

Year	Casualty: Fatal	Casualty: Serious	Casualty: Slight	Total hit and run casualties	% change since 2009	% change since 2017
2009	11	297	2,782	3,090	n/a	n/a
2010	15	307	3,085	3,407	10%	n/a
2011	14	306	3,215	3,535	14%	n/a
2012	15	360	3,501	3,876	25%	n/a
2013	8	306	3,840	4,154	34%	n/a
2014	8	298	4,539	4,845	57%	n/a
2015	11	287	4,647	4,945	60%	n/a
2016	No data	No data	No data	No data	n/a	n/a
2017	0	300	1,645	6,765ⁱ	119%	n/a
2018	47	1319	5,985	7,351	138%	9%
2019	12	870	6,624	7,506ⁱⁱ	143%	11%
2020	14	682	6,377	7,079ⁱⁱⁱ	129%	5%
2021	12	761	6,935	7,708	149%	14%

Note:

Fatal includes deaths that occurs in less than 30 days as a result of the collision. Fatal does not include death from natural causes or suicide.

Serious injuries include: broken neck or back, severe head injury (unconscious), severe chest injury (any difficulty breathing), internal injuries, loss of arm or leg (or part), deep penetrating wound, fracture, concussion, deep cuts/lacerations as well as other injuries

Slight injuries include: whiplash or neck pain, shallow cuts/lacerations/abrasions, sprains and strains (not necessarily requiring medical treatment), bruising, slight shock requiring roadside attention.⁵

ⁱ This total includes blank or unknown

ⁱⁱ This total excludes blank or unknown. Total including blank or unknown is 18,294

ⁱⁱⁱ Total includes blank or unknown



VICTIMS' MODE OF TRAVEL

Data going back to 2013 shows about 50 per cent of hit and run victims were traveling by car. In 2021 this fell to 32 per cent of hit and run victims travelling by car, although this may be a pandemic effect.

The quality and consistency of the data for mode of travel of victims varies considerably from year to year making it hard to draw firm conclusions about the impact of hit and run collisions on people travelling in different ways.

For example, I was provided with no data for pedestrian victims of hit and run in 2018, 2019, or 2020, but in those years the numbers for victim travelling by car are particularly high.

Data for all collisions on the TfL Road Danger Reduction dashboard show that cars are the vehicles most frequently involved in injury collisions with pedestrians. Cars are also the

most common vehicle involved in collisions resulting in casualty regardless of the mode of travel of the casualty.⁶

It is likely that cars are the most common vehicle involved in hit and run incidents that cause casualties. TfL should collate and share the hit and run data by both mode of victim and by vehicle hitting and running, to provide a clear picture to inform targets and action to reduce these crashes.

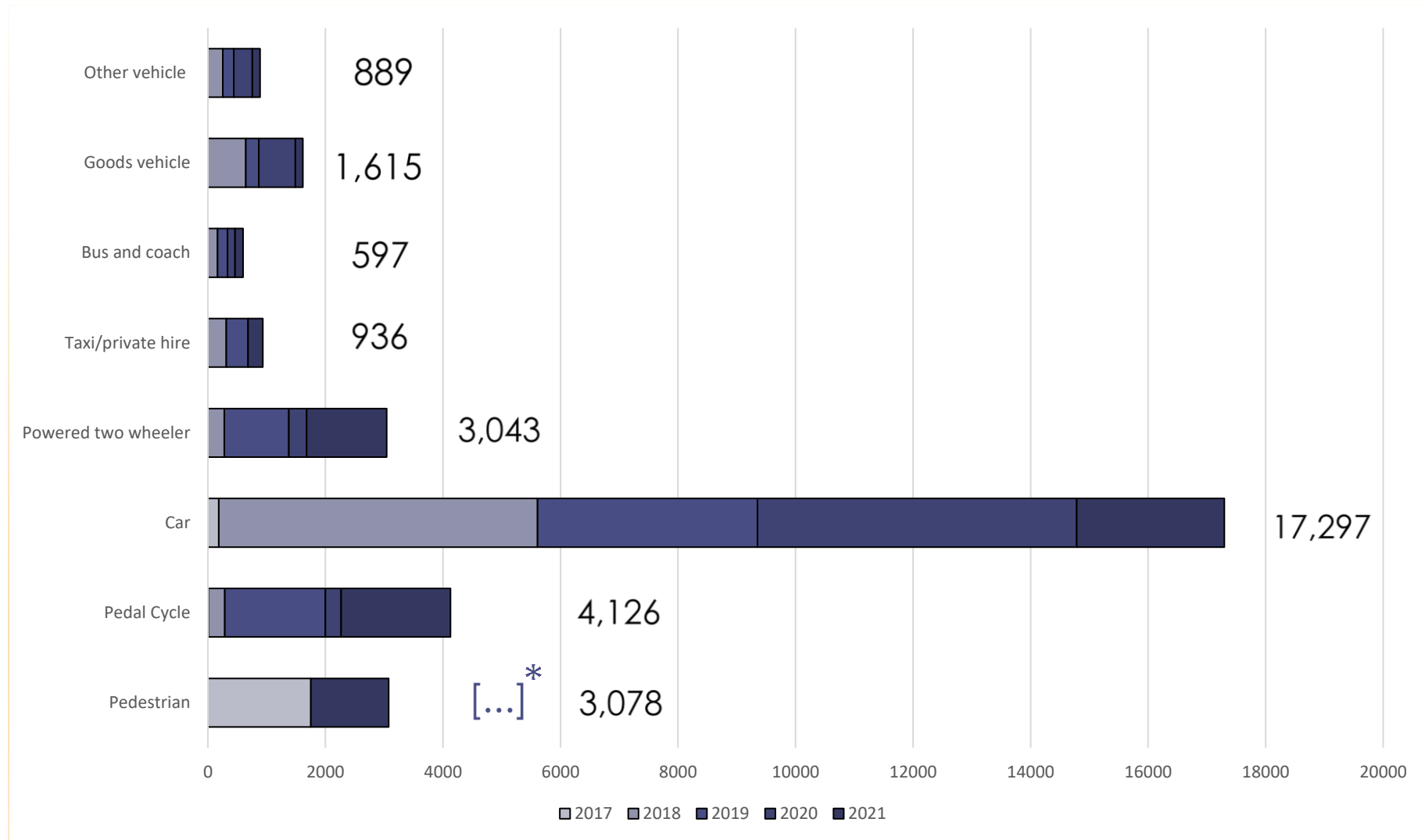
It is an offence under Section 170 Road Traffic Act 1988 to fail to stop at the scene of a collision.⁷

The offence carries a fine and up to 6 months imprisonment as well as 5 to 10 penalty points or disqualification from driving.⁸

Figure 3: Hit and run casualties by mode of travel 2013-2021

Mode of travel	Pedestrian	Pedal Cycle	Car	Powered two wheeler	Taxi/private hire	Bus and coach	Goods vehicle	Other vehicle	Total
2013	1,043	890	1,593	391	101	55	62	16	4,151
2014	1,212	1,014	1,823	No data	No data	No data	No data	643	4,692
2015	1,125	911	2,024	535	185	58	94	13	4,945
2016	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data
2017	1,751	7	187	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	1,945
2018	No data	280	5,424	277	312	162	644	252	7,351
2019	No data	1,710	3,740	1,101	371	172	222	189	7,505
2020	No data	270	5,433	302	No data	128	624	315	7,072
2021	1,327	1,859	2,513	1,363	253	135	125	133	7,708
Total	6,458	6,941	22,737	3,969	1,222	710	1,771	1,561	45,369

Figure 4: Hit and run casualties 2017-2021 by victim mode of travel



*Note: Data supplied in answer to Mayor’s Questions. Pedestrian data is missing for 2018, 2019, and 2020.⁹ The only modes of travel available for 2017 are pedestrian pedal cycle, and car.

THE BOROUGHES

The number of hit and run casualties varies considerably across different boroughs.

In 2021 **Tower Hamlets was the borough with the most hit and run casualties (457)**, this is followed by Lambeth (409), Westminster (363), Newham (353) and Southwark (351).

Excluding the City of London, **the borough with the fewest hit and run casualties in 2021 was Kingston (75)**.

Looking at the casualty data by borough across five years (Figure 6) there is a broadly steady

picture with some boroughs routinely seeing high levels of hit and run collisions. TfL and the MPS should investigate any causes of this difference between boroughs and address them to help reach the Mayor's Vision Zero targets.

Several boroughs show a marked reduction in 2020 which may be explained by the pandemic reducing journeys by car as well as on foot, by bike, and bus. Wandsworth and Barnet bucked this trend with big increases in hit and run casualties in 2020.

Figure 5: Number of hit and runs in London by borough in 2021

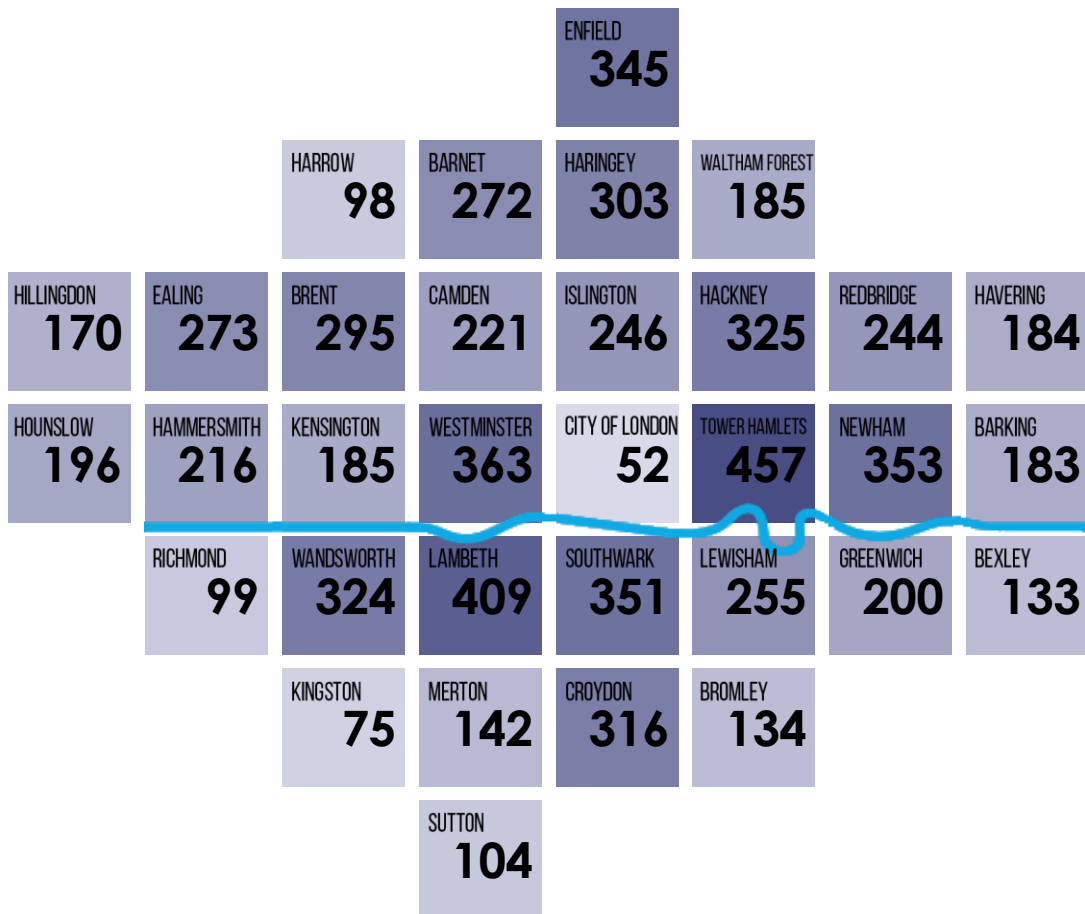
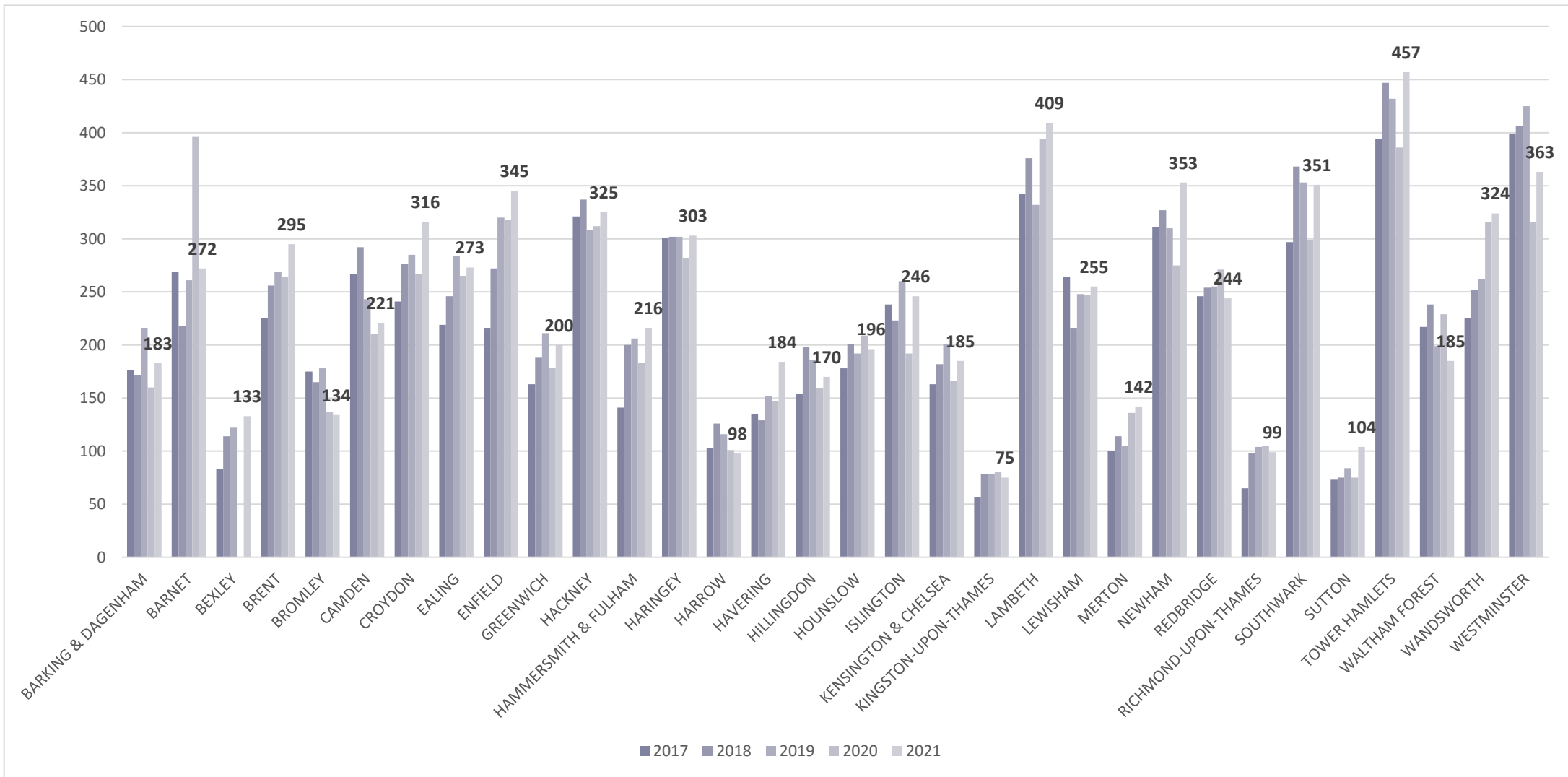


Figure 6: Hit and run casualties 2017-2021 by borough



Note: Consistent data was not provided for City of London or Aviation/Heathrow and so they have been excluded from this graph.

Figure 7: Hit and run casualties by borough, year and percentage increase 2017-2021

Borough	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	% increase 2017-2021
Aviation/Heathrow	No data	7	5	6	3	No data	n/a
Barking & Dagenham	No data	176	172	216	160	183	4%
Barnet	No data	269	218	261	396	272	1%
Bexley	No data	83	114	122	No data	133	60%
Brent	No data	225	256	269	264	295	31%
Bromley	No data	175	165	178	137	134	-23%
Camden	No data	267	292	243	210	221	-17%
City Of London	No data	No data	No data	No data	No data	52	n/a
Croydon	No data	241	276	285	267	316	31%
Ealing	No data	219	246	284	265	273	25%
Enfield	No data	216	272	320	318	345	60%
Greenwich	No data	163	188	211	178	200	23%
Hackney	No data	321	337	308	312	325	1%
Hammersmith & Fulham	No data	141	200	206	183	216	53%
Haringey	No data	301	302	302	282	303	1%
Harrow	No data	103	126	116	101	98	-5%
Havering	No data	135	129	152	147	184	36%
Hillingdon	No data	154	198	186	159	170	10%
Hounslow	No data	178	201	192	209	196	10%
Islington	No data	238	223	260	192	246	3%
Kensington & Chelsea	No data	163	182	201	166	185	13%
Kingston-Upon-Thames	No data	57	78	78	80	75	32%
Lambeth	No data	342	376	332	394	409	20%
Lewisham	No data	264	216	248	247	255	-3%
Merton	No data	100	114	105	136	142	42%
Newham	No data	311	327	310	275	353	14%
Redbridge	No data	246	254	255	271	244	-1%
Richmond-Upon-Thames	No data	65	98	104	105	99	52%
Southwark	No data	297	368	353	299	351	18%
Sutton	No data	73	75	84	75	104	42%
Tower Hamlets	No data	394	447	432	386	457	16%
Waltham Forest	No data	217	238	199	229	185	-15%
Wandsworth	No data	225	252	262	316	324	44%
Westminster	No data	399	406	425	316	363	-9%
Overall - London	No data	6,765	7,351	7,505	7,078	7,708	14%



QUALITY OF DATA

Jenny Jones, Siân Berry and I have asked an almost identical written question to the Mayor of London about hit and run crashes every year from 2014 to 2022.¹⁰

The way the data were presented in each of those answers varied hugely from year to year. This could be due to changes in the way that hit and runs are recorded, or other changes in recording of collisions and casualties, but given that the trend is upward consistently across all years, data consistency certainly needs to be improved.

Apart from layout differences, the actual data received each year varied too. Some years included 'Aviation Policing', some years included the City of London, some years included 'Heathrow' as a borough **and in the answer for 2020, Bexley, a borough of 246,500 people was excluded entirely.**¹¹

The data for 2016 covered just two months limiting the results and trends that can be drawn from the data as a whole.

We were told by the Mayor:

"The capability to report this level of information was enabled when the MPS implemented the Case Overview and Preparation Application (COPA) for traffic collision reporting, processing and prosecution. **The system was introduced in November 2016, so the data are only available from this date.**"¹²

The data for 2017 does not contain any details about fatal collisions in London, the response from the Mayor said:

"Please note we do not hold data for Fatal and serious Personal Injuries please refer to Roads and Transport Policing Command (RTPC)/Borough."¹³

This is a remarkable response to a question to the Mayor given that the Mayor is accountable for all parts of the GLA and should have access to all data.

In 2019 we were given the following disclaimer implying the number of hit and run collisions may be significantly lower than the data provided:

"Due to issues with the way fail to stop collisions are recorded it is not possible to provide accurate statistics about the true number of failed to stop collisions and the resulting outcomes. TfL and the MPS will be looking at this as part of their research and analysis.

"The data is the best currently available but...does not provide an accurate record of fail to stop collisions. The true number is likely to be significantly lower."¹⁴





“MOPAC manages all Mayor’s Questions and correspondence received to ensure that it is meeting its obligation to respond in a timely manner and to a high standard.”

Data from that report shows MOPAC is regularly failing to answer even half the Mayor’s questions within agreed GLA timeframes.¹⁵

The last time MOPAC responded to 100 per cent of questions in the agreed time frame was in March 2021.

The MPS is in the process of moving a number of standalone data systems that manage custody, investigations and intelligence in to one single CONNECT system.¹⁶

The MPS knows there are still risks with the CONNECT system. In an answer to a question the Mayor said:

“While some risks around the technical delivery and product stability persist, these are steadily being mitigated by consistent testing by the MPS and the adoption of an agreed detailed plan of approach by the supplier with regards to the early identification and resolution of issues.”¹⁷

It is possible that the move to the new CONNECT record management system is causing issues in the speed of the MPS response to data requests.

TIMELINESS

Timeliness of the response to our questions to the Mayor has also become worse over time. The majority of requests for this data were, for many years, answered within a week.

The exceptions to this were the questions from 2019 that took 35 days to respond to, and the question from 2022 that took 62 days to respond to. **The question from 2023 is still currently outstanding, and we have been waiting over 327 days for a response.**

Figure 8: Time taken to respond to Mayor’s Questions

Mayor’s Question Number	Days taken to respond
2015/2727	4
2016/3094	4
2017/3981	4
2018/3070	6
2019/12046	35
2020/0071	0
2021/0970	1
2022/2906	62
2023/0651	327+

According to the Mayor’s Office for Policing and Crime (MOPAC) monthly report to the London Assembly Police and Crime Committee:

IMPACT ON TARGETS

The inconsistency in data has worrying implications for the longer-term goals of the Mayor, TfL and MPS.

If data recording systems or practices are changing regularly, it becomes difficult to track progress made in reducing the number of hit

and runs on our roads, and any impact of the Mayor's Police and Crime Plan.¹⁸

The Mayor published his Vision Zero Action Plan in 2018 where he set targets to reduce the numbers of people killed or seriously injured on London's roads. He set an interim target that by 2022 there would be 65 per cent fewer people killed or seriously injured compared to 2005-09 levels and 70 per cent fewer killed or seriously injured by London buses.¹⁹

The Mayor missed these targets managing only a 38 per cent reduction in the number of people killed or seriously injured and 54 per cent fewer killed or seriously injured by London buses.²⁰

The target for 2030 is for nobody to be killed by a London bus and for a 70 per cent reduction in people killed or seriously injured compared to 2010-14 levels with no deaths or serious injuries by 2041.

While there is no Vision Zero target for hit and run, it is almost no wonder the Mayor and TfL are missing their Vision Zero target if they can't

even get their own hit and run data straight. Because if the data doesn't exist then the problem essentially becomes invisible.



RECOMMENDATIONS

Recommendation 1:

The Mayor should introduce a hit and run action plan and set a target to reduce hit and run collisions as part of his Vision Zero strategy.

Recommendation 2:

The MPS and TfL must improve both the quality of the data they capture on hit and run collisions in London, and the way that data is stored, analysed, and shared with the public in future.

Recommendation 3:

The MPS and MOPAC should respond to written questions in the agreed time frame and to a consistent standard.

Recommendation 4:

The MPS and TfL should address all data inconsistencies and provide a validated set of data showing the number of hit and run collisions each year since 2010, recording victim mode of travel, severity of injury and mode of travel of person failing to stop, so that trends can be accurately tracked. They should also analyse changes in hit and run since 2010 and report their findings and proposed action to Londoners.



WHAT DO YOU THINK?

I would like to hear more from Londoners about their views on hit and run in London.

Please get in touch with me if you have any comments or suggestions.

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This report sets out my views as an individual Assembly Member and not the agreed view of the entire Assembly.

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² Hit and run: an unacceptable epidemic, November 2016 https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sian_berry_am_hit_and_run_nov2016_1.pdf

³ Hit and run: an unacceptable epidemic, November 2016 https://www.london.gov.uk/sites/default/files/sian_berry_am_hit_and_run_nov2016_1.pdf

⁴ Hit and run casualties 2016, October 2017, (Could you report the number of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2016, with a breakdown by a) road user mode, b) severity type, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution? Please present this information in table format.) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-2016>

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⁶ TfL Road danger reduction dashboard <https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiMTIzYzRiZDMtZDZiYS00OWYyLTk3YTQtN2RkMGNiZTRmOTJkIiwidCI6IjFmYmQ2NWJmLTVkZWYtNGVIYS1hNjkyLWEwODJmMjU1MzQ2YiIsImMiOiJh9>

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⁸ Fail to stop/report road accident (Revised 2017) <https://www.sentencingcouncil.org.uk/offences/magistrates-court/item/fail-to-stopreport-road-accident-revised-2017/>

⁹ Hit and run prosecutions 2020, March 2021, (Could you report the most recent figures for numbers of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2020, with a breakdown by: a) road user mode, b) severity type, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution?) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-prosecutions-2020>

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Hit and run casualties 2018, June 2019, (Could you report the number of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2018, with a breakdown by a) road user mode, b) severity type, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution?) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-2018>

¹⁰ Hit and run casualties and prosecutions 2022, February 2023, (Could you provide the most recent figures for numbers of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2022, broken down by: a) road user mode of both parties, b) severity type by CRASH/COPA (Collision Recording and Sharing system/Case Overview Preparation Application) categories: Fatal, Very Serious, Moderately Serious, Less Serious, and Slight, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution?) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-and-prosecutions-2022>

Hit and run casualties and prosecutions 2021, September 2022, (Could you provide the most recent figures for numbers of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2021, broken down by: a) road user mode of both parties, b) severity type by CRASH/COPA categories: Fatal, Very Serious, Moderately Serious, Less Serious, and Slight, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution?) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-and-prosecutions-2021>

Hit and run prosecutions 2020, March 2021, (Could you report the most recent figures for numbers of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2020, with a breakdown by: a) road user mode, b) severity type, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution?) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-prosecutions-2020>

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Hit and run casualties 2017, November 2018, (Could you report the number of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2017, with a breakdown by a) road user mode, b) severity type, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution?) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-2017>

Hit and run casualties 2016, October 2017, (Could you report the number of casualties relating to hit and runs in London in 2016, with a breakdown by a) road user mode, b) severity type, c) borough, and d) whether there was a prosecution? Please present this information in table format.) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-2016>

Hit and run casualties, September 2016, (Could you report the number of casualties relating to hit and runs in 2015, with a breakdown by a) road user mode b) severity type c) borough and d) whether there was a prosecution? Please present information in table format.) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-0>

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<https://www.ons.gov.uk/visualisations/censuspopulationchange/E09000004/>



¹² Hit and run casualties 2016, <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/hit-and-run-casualties-2016>

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¹⁵ Report to the Police and Crime Committee: 4th December 2023, <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/londonassembly/meetings/documents/g7411/Public%20reports%20pack%20Thursday%2014-Dec-2023%2010.00%20Police%20and%20Crime%20Committee.pdf?T=10>

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¹⁷ MPS Connect risks, September 2023 (What risks have the Metropolitan Police Service (MPS) and MOPAC identified around the implementation of the Connect IT system and how are they working to mitigate them?) <https://www.london.gov.uk/who-we-are/what-london-assembly-does/questions-mayor/find-an-answer/mps-connect-risks>

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