

A Mayoral Transport Statement of No Intent

Valerie Shawcross AM

Labour Spokesperson for Transport

Mayor Boris Johnson claims he has a vision for London. Yet this is not backed up by new ideas or proposals in the transport strategy Statement of Intent. All the Statement reveals is that this Mayor lacks any real intent to plan for a better London.

London is faced with significant challenges and opportunities over the next 20 years. Population growth, climate change, uncertainty about the economic sectors which have supported growth in the past. There are great opportunities to ensure that the population growth results in sustainable economic growth, that we turn tackling the threat of climate change into new job opportunities and to ensure all Londoners live in a fairer, safer and more equal London.

However, there is also great risk. If we fail to respond to these challenges London will not just stay as it is. London's transport is already seriously overcrowded and congested in many areas, air quality is extremely poor and CO2 emissions rising. If the Mayor fails to reduce our dependence on the private car, to plan for major increases in the capacity of our public transport and to find ways to manage travel demand then London's future success will be at risk.

Short Term Plans from a Short Term Mayor

Perhaps Mayor Johnson's greatest failure is his short attention span. His lack of **long-term commitment** to London is apparent throughout in his statement.

The new Transport Strategy should set out policies and plans to take London from 2011 to 2031 – this may seem an extraordinary timescale to try to plan for, but the reality is that for transport infrastructure projects 20 years is no time at all.

For instance Crossrail was included in the previous Transport Strategy published in 2001 even though the project was not then funded and could not be completed for at least another 15 years. Had the previous Mayor been as unwilling as Mayor Johnson to think about London's future and similarly failed to put his full support and TfL resources behind this project it is highly unlikely that the scheme would have gone ahead.

In contrast Mayor Johnson seems **uninterested in developing transport plans beyond his Mayoral term**. Last year he threw a host of projects out of development and onto the bonfire. He complained that they were unfunded and couldn't be delivered in the short term - instead of championing ambitious plans to increase London's public transport capacity in the future, he gave up on them.

Boris Johnson needs to start thinking bigger and standing up for London. For a start he should reinstate the following schemes in his transport strategy:

- Cross River Tram
- East London Transit (later phases)
- Greenwich Waterfront Transit
- Croydon Tramlink Extensions beginning with the link to Crystal Palace
- DLR extension to Dagenham

- Thames Gateway bridge – funded already by PFI credits

The Mayor should be championing these projects to the government, and keeping projects in development for the post 2017 transport settlement.

But this is still not enough for London. He should be looking even further ahead. What next after Crossrail and the Tube Upgrades? The Mayor must adopt now ambitious plans for London's future. For instance

- Crossrail 2 – Clapham Junction to Kings Cross
- Underground extensions
 - Northern Line to Battersea
 - Bakerloo Line to Camberwell and Catford
- Four tracking rail services between Tottenham Hale/Seven Sisters and Stansted
- Further development of London overground and better integration with National Rail.

Planning for Sustainable Growth or Planning for Press Releases?

Despite Mayor Johnson's claims that he is linking up his transport, economic development and spatial development plans, his transport statement fails to provide plans for better transport for areas with regeneration potential. The Mayor irrationally believes that growth in housing and in business can be achieved without providing the new and improved transport infrastructure needed to support that growth!

The Mayor is **failing to make serious plans** for transport to support London's regeneration areas. Instead of focusing on serious transport improvements for London he hopes to distract the public from his shortcomings with eye catching **PR stunts** which when probed turn out to lack any substance.

Whatever happened to his plans for a **Park Lane Underpass**? Included in 'Way to Go' and announced with a fanfare, but not a mention in the Statement.

Under pressure for new ideas he claimed in a live radio interview that his officers were looking into ideas for a **Living Bridge** like the original London Bridge or the Ponte Vecchi in Florence crossing the Thames. But when questioned after the show it emerged that in fact no resources had been committed to developing this idea and he had not even spoken to the borough councils on either side of the bridge – in part because he didn't even know where he would put it!

And what of **Boris Island**, his fantasy plan for a new airport on a man made island in the Thames Estuary? It has been derided by MPs and local authorities in both Essex and Kent as a ridiculous and destructive scheme. Given the Mayor's often quoted support for Crossrail, he does not seem to understand that the Estuary Airport scheme seriously jeopardises it.

Whilst promoting PR stunts and media catching ideas, the Mayor is **failing to focus on the serious transport projects** which London's deprived areas need. He cancelled plans for the Thames Gateway Bridge – despite it being fully funded to the tune of £300m of PFI credits which now may be completely lost to London. He has nothing to

offer for the Lower Lea Valley, Elephant & Castle and worst of all given his election pledges **nothing to help outer London** town centres like Croydon, Brent Cross or Dagenham.

It is critical that the Mayor keeps his promise to deliver **better transport for outer London**. London's economic growth must not be limited to central London, but that is only sustainable if it is supported with better public transport.

Although the Mayor speaks warmly of his commitment to improving transport for outer London so far **his record is lamentable**. Key transport projects for Outer London including the Croydon Tramlink extensions and the extension of the DLR to Dagenham Docks have all been cancelled – albeit rumours abound about reinstatement - is this really the way to do transport planning?

His only action on his manifesto pledge for express orbital buses to serve Outer London has been an increase the frequency of one existing service. And he has broken his promise of an “Emergency Public Rail Summit” to address issues such as overcrowding, Oyster Pre-pay and safety on the overground services.

To truly support Outer London growth the Mayor should be focusing on enhancing public transport in ‘growth corridors’, providing better links between town centres and enhancing services into local district and town centres.

The Mayor has also failed to fully recognise that the need for good public transport doesn't only apply during the working week. More and more we are seeing parts of outer and inner London becoming completely gridlocked at the weekend as far too many Londoners are forced to take to their cars as the services to shopping and leisure areas and places of worship are simply inadequate. With major engineering works planned for the Underground for years to come the Mayor must bring forward plans for improved public transport provision at the weekends.

Mayor of the ‘Age of Stupid’

Unless there are significant reductions in global greenhouse gas emissions, we will soon reach the “tipping point” beyond which runaway climate change become inevitable. Ours may be the first and last generation with the opportunity to address this.

Yet it is clear that Mayor Johnson has failed to grasp the seriousness of the situation or the importance of his role. If he continues **his most enduring legacy may be a climate crisis for his successor**.

The Mayor downplays the importance of environmental matters throughout this strategy. The environment is placed 5 out of 6 Mayoral priorities. If the Mayor intends to address these priorities in turn, we'll have to wait some time for improvements to the environment.

The Mayor is eager to play up the benefits to the individual of travel, and stresses the importance of freedom to travel and yet shies away from addressing the problems that car traffic produces for the environment, and the health problems and premature deaths that pollution causes. **Bolder new measures are needed to reduce people's need to**

travel but again the Mayor seems unwilling to take any leadership role, or explore different ways of addressing ongoing problems.

Radical measures are needed if we are to meet the target of a 60% reduction in carbon emissions by 2025, but the current Mayor is content to make soothing noises and merely tinker at the edges.

The statement also constantly seeks to play down or simply ignore the negative health impacts of London's poor air quality despite the fact that the Campaign for Cleaner Air in London calculates that in 2005 there were some **2,905 premature deaths attributable to dangerous airborne particles** among adults of 30 years of age and older in Greater London.

The Mayor's statement focuses very heavily on his plan to put 100,000 electric vehicles on London's streets. This sounds pretty impressive at first, however this equates to less than 5% of road vehicles and whilst electric vehicles generate fewer emissions at the site of the vehicle than conventional diesel or petrol vehicles, their emissions are merely displaced if the electricity used to fuel them comes from coal-fuelled plants.

Cars & motorcycles currently account for 49% of London's CO2 emissions from ground-based transport. In order to meet our target of a 60% reduction in CO2 by 2025, every one of those private vehicles would need to be electric to meet the target.

The reality is that the only way to make these critical reductions in carbon emission and air pollution is to get people out of their cars and walking, cycling or using public transport instead. The Mayor has **failed to set TfL any targets for reducing car use** and the target to increase cycling from 2% of journeys to 5% by 2026 -- simply isn't enough to address congestion, air quality or prevent run-away climate change. The Mayor should set out exactly how the reduction in emissions is to be achieved. Which measures will deliver how much reduction & by when?

Transport for all or just for some?

Boris Johnson claims he wants to "expand opportunities for all [London's] people" and yet his proposals fall far short of providing a fully accessible transport network in London.

Accessible Buses

Under the previous Mayor all of London's Buses were fitted with ramps and made accessible. However, at present **only 45% of bus stops in London are physically accessible**. In comparison to underground and rail stations the cost of making bus stops accessible is low and yet rather than pledging to make 100% of stops accessible the Mayor says he will only increase this to 76% by 2017.

Step-Free Access to the Underground

In a city the size of London, the Underground system is one of the quickest ways to get around and it is disappointed that the Mayor has only committed himself to providing step-free access at 29% of stations by 2017. As a result, many **disabled passengers, older people and parents with young children are being denied access to the tube**.

In fact since his election Mayor Johnson has deferred of 22 of the 45 planned step free access projects. This is a major step back from the previous Mayor's plans to provide step-free access at 92 underground stations by 2013 (a third of the network). This is particularly concerning in the run up to the 2012 Paralympics and makes us wonder how the Mayor is planning to keep his post-Beijing pledge to make London's Games the most accessible ever.

Most worryingly a number of the deferrals of Step Free Access projects have been the schemes at major interchange stations. For example plans to make Finsbury Park, serving 30 million passengers a year with a likely 40% passenger increase in the next 15 years, step-free have been deferred. Accessibility should be given higher priority and not just treated as a "nice to have".

Porsches or pedestrians?

Whilst the idea of "smoothing the traffic" in London is superficially appealing, the reality is that there is no mystical spare time in traffic signals and that additional time for motorists almost always means less time to cross or a longer wait at the side of the road for pedestrians. The result may well be greater risk taking and more accidents!

Pedestrians, in particular vulnerable older and disabled people and parents with young children, should not be adversely affected by plans to rephase traffic lights and should be allowed sufficient time to cross. The Mayor should guarantee that the rephasing of traffic lights to maximize the efficient operation of the network does not disproportionately undermine pedestrians' rights.

Mayor Johnson makes a great play out of his rejection of his predecessors' policy of putting the interests of pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users ahead of the car. He says there will be no more hierarchy and everyone should get an equal chance. And yet it is clear from his first year that **he does in fact have a transport hierarchy - his puts the polluter ahead of the pedestrian.**

So what should the Mayor be doing?

The Mayor should be focusing his Transport Strategy on addressing four key themes,

1. Supporting sustainable growth and regeneration - reducing deprivation and social inequalities
2. Tackling climate change and air pollution by vastly reducing the number of car journeys and investing in cleaner technology for public transport
3. Making London's success accessible to all by making our transport system accessible to all
4. Continuing to make London's transport safer – particularly improving road safety

With these themes in mind he should then draw up more specific plans.

Walking and cycling to a healthier city

Not only are cycling and walking two of the greenest ways of travelling, they are a great way to promote a healthier city. Whilst the Mayor claims to agree with this, he is not going anything like far enough in terms of encouraging people to walk and cycle. Indeed he has abandoned the policy of putting pedestrians and cyclists first when allocating road space and failed to adopt any useful targets for increasing the proportion of journeys made on foot or by bike.

The facilitation of walking in London needs to undergo a revolution of investment. There are areas of serious pedestrian congestion which need physical improvement, for instance around Waterloo, London Bridge and Victoria. There is also a still great deal of work to be done in all parts of the capital to make our public realm fully accessible to wheelchair users. However care must be taken to ensure that any public realm or shared space scheme also considers the needs of other disabled people, particularly the blind and partially sighted.

Likewise we would wish to see a similar increase in investment in facilities for cycling. It has been extremely disappointing to see that much of the funding for new initiatives such as the cycling super highways has been found by cutting funding for the London Cycle Network rather than an increase in the overall budget for cycling. Whilst we support the introduction of the London Cycle Hire scheme and super highways we believe that these will do little to encourage cycling for shorter, local journeys particularly in outer London.

The Mayor's target to increase the share of journeys made by bike from 2% to 5% simply isn't challenging enough. He should set a higher target and particularly focus on the potential of cycling as an alternative to the car in outer London. He should focus on investing to reduce the issues which really put people off cycling - the shortage of secure cycle parking (particularly at key destinations such as stations, shopping areas and leisure destinations), cycle training and most crucially road safety.

The core Mayoral objective of 'smoothing the traffic' is not just ill defined but is very fool hardy – it suggests that pedestrian flow is unimportant and that reducing car journey times is paramount. It invites a destabilisation of the current equilibrium of vehicle numbers coming into central London and could reverse the achievements of the previous Mayor in reducing car journeys.

Rather than focusing on speeding up the traffic the Mayor should turn his attention to improving road safety, particularly reducing serious accidents and fatalities of cyclists, pedestrians and children.

- Remove gyratories which sever communities, are difficult for pedestrians and cyclists to travel through and are often accident hotspots
- Where ever possible remove railings which can trap cyclists and provide safe and convenient crossing points where pedestrians want to cross rather than where it suits traffic engineers to remove the need for pedestrians to cross in dangerous places
- Speed kills. Make 20mph the default speed limit in London - including on sensitive locations along the TfL Red Route Network. London's Borough Councils find that their road safety plans can be undermined by the inflexible approach of TfL to Red Route issues.
- Reduce danger from HGVs – bendy buses do not “wipe out cyclists”, but HGVs do
- Road maintenance – badly maintained, pitted and potholed roads are a real threat to cyclists. The Mayor has cut the budget by 12% which he should restore.
- Complete the London Cycle Network + and the provision of more safer routes to key destinations particularly in outer London.

The best electric car is a tram

The Mayor is showing great enthusiasm for expanding the use of electric cars – yet bizarrely has withdrawn his support for expanding London's tram network, cancelling plans for Croydon Tramlink extension and for a new Cross River Tram from Camden to Brixton and Peckham. TfL's own figures show that the Tram has the lowest CO2 emissions per passenger km of any form of public transport, it's fully accessible and “washes it's face” financially too! The Mayor should get on board and include in his strategy:

- Plans to extend Tramlink to Crystal Palace, Sutton and Streatham – providing high capacity transport links to Outer South London
- Reinstate the Cross River Tram to link deprived areas of Inner London to Central London
- Include a long term goal to link the Brixton arm to Streatham and Peckham to Crystal Palace
- And, commit to explore further Tram options for other parts of Outer London

Enhance and extend the Tube & DLR

Despite recent improvements the London Underground still suffers from chronic overcrowding and serious overheating which the Mayor's Transport Strategy must address.

It is vital that tube is refurbished and capacity increases achieved but also important to understand that large areas of London are dependent on other forms of transport and investment has to be balanced.

The Mayor should:

- Continue upgrade plans, keep to schedule and find ways to deliver more reliable, frequent and pleasant journeys for Londoners

- Seek to minimise disruption to services and provide better replacement service options
- Not allow accessibility projects to be sacrificed and commit to delivering a 100% accessible service as soon as possible
- Continue to explore better ways to cooling and air condition the Tube
- Explore and start planning ways to extend and improve the network over the long term including
 - Bakerloo Line southern extension to Camberwell – Catford
 - Northern Line Kennington to Battersea
 - DLR to Dagenham
 - New interchange between Central and Piccadilly Lines at Park Royal
- Ensure that fares stay affordable
- Build effective industrial relations. A no strike deal will never happen so he must find a way to work with unions and prevent disruption

Rail for Londoners

Many parts of London, particularly South and Outer London, are not on the underground network and really rely on overground services. We would encourage the Mayor to continue to lobby for more direct TfL control of overground rail to ensure that services are run in the interests of Londoners as well as long distance commuters. In his manifesto he promised that although he did not have direct control over rail services he would “not use this as an excuse to shirk responsibility” and would “stand up for rail commuters”. He should keep this promise and include aspirational plans in his Transport Strategy.

The Mayor should aim for overground services to match the Tube in terms of staffing, security, information and fares! The Mayor should fight for metro style services with four trains per hour minimum frequencies on commuter lines.

The Mayor should continue to support crucial major rail capacity projects, particularly Crossrail and Thameslink, but he should also be campaigning for smaller scale projects which could make a tremendous difference to services for Londoners. He should also be particularly mindful of the long lead time of major rail capacity projects – it is essential that he starts to promote ideas now to ensure that once CrossRail is delivered we are ready to start on the next major projects to increase rail capacity in London.

Further rail projects that should be included in the Strategy include:

- Crossrail 2 – a new link from South West London through central London and out to the north east
- High Speed 2 – linking London to the regions and reducing the demand for domestic flights
- 4 tracking of the Seven Sisters/Tottenham Hale to Stansted line to ensure both express and stopping services can continue
- Complete the electrification of London rail lines, including the Barking-Gospel Oak line
- Address pinch points which restrict network and high passenger congestion areas
- Making London’s overground rail network fully accessibility

Buses – the transport of the people

London's buses have been the great public transport success story of recent years. Network coverage, frequency and reliability has improved vastly and as a result more and more Londoners are choosing to travel by bus.

Sadly Mayor Johnson does not seem to share Londoners' enthusiasm for buses, rarely if ever travelling this way. He seems more concerned about how the buses look from the outside and what other road users think of them than he is about the service provided for bus passengers.

So instead of improving services the Mayor is making backwards steps! He is wasting money removing high capacity vehicles and replacing with higher cost services for no improvement in capacity, journey times or passenger comfort. The central plank of Mayor's bus policy is the return of the routemaster – whilst we welcome the idea of lighter and more environmentally friendly vehicles we still have concerns about safety and the practicality of an open backed bus.

What the Mayor should be doing:

- The Mayor should be considering how to make the next step change in bus services, particularly in outer London. To make buses a viable alternative to the car they need to be high frequency and journey times must be reliable. We need more bus lanes and more bus priority measures to make sure journeys aren't slowed by increasing congestion. There needs to be a rethink about the types of service offered from express routes between town centres to hail and ride in low density suburbs.
- Buses are the most flexible form of public transport in terms of responding to changing travel demands both in terms of changes in passenger numbers on existing routes and changes to journey patterns (i.e. new employment areas, hospitals, schools, shopping areas and leisure centres) – BUT in practise this doesn't always happen. It can take years for a route to be reviewed and they are often considered in isolation rather than a holistic approach to the travel demands in a particular area. We need a full scale review of London's Bus Map
- Mayor should be bold. Buses are the one form of public transport that could be made 100% accessible within the current business plan period to 2017. Everyone in London should be able to get on or off at every stop in London, not just 40% of them.

Dial a Ride

Dial-a-Ride is highly thought of by all users and an invaluable service. However, its performance has recently caused concern.

In the short term the Mayor needs to ensure the centralised computer booking system is made to work effectively. Since the system was centralised many users have lost all confidence in it citing its loss of local knowledge and seemingly lack of common sense, (for instance leading to 'friends' used to travelling together getting separate buses or one getting an out ward journey and the other a return). Much of this knowledge was known at the previous individual sites and users now find the process very impersonal and not able to meet their needs. As older and disabled people continue to lead active lives issues such as longer journeys must also be tackled. The overwhelming feeling is the "service is great when we can get it".

In the longer term as the population in London grows older and less mobile, Dial a Ride and the other complimentary travel options for those unable to use public transport such as Taxi card and community transport currently run by individual boroughs and organisations will have to be coordinated and properly resourced to provide a transport system that properly supports older and disabled people to be full members of society. The Mayor will have to take the lead in ensuring that all Londoners are able to participate actively both in their local communities and across London whether or not they can access public transport.

Affordable Fares & Smart Tickets

It is essential that public transport fares remain affordable. Public transport is essential for access to work and no one should be priced out. If we are going to succeed in persuading people to get out of their cars then public transport must be priced competitively.

The Mayor should confirm his commitment to concessionary fare schemes such as the Freedom Pass, half-price fares for people on low incomes and free travel for children.

It is disappointing that we are still waiting for Oyster Pre-pay to be accepted on all overground services in London and even more so to hear that even when it is accepted the fare for many journeys will still be far higher than equivalent trips by tube. The Mayor should aspire to equalise underground and overground fares.

We welcome the commitment to innovation in Smart Ticketing, including chips embedded in mobile phones or one touch credit cards, but urge the Mayor to ensure that simple options remain available and that all ticketing systems are secure – protecting people's identity, personal and financial data.

The Mayor should also investigate ideas to provide incentives and technological support to help change travel and working patterns.

Informed and easier travel choices

Providing more accessible information and actively guiding Londoners' travel choices is an objective we can all support. We urge the Mayor to make London a leader in the use of new technology to keep Londoners informed of their transport options.

Schemes such as Legible London and Way Finding will help promote walking in London with enormous health and sustainability benefits. These types of schemes should be major capital programmes and not regarded as small scale 'nice to haves'. They should be at the centre of policy on developing London's public realm.

New technology should be at the heart of changing travel and working patterns and this is particularly important for outer London. We should emulate the North American concept of "New Mobility Hubs" – seamless door-to-door solutions that enables people to have customised solutions for individual journeys, using a range of technologies.

Supporting London's freight and business travel

The Mayor should be developing a policy towards freight in London which focuses on efficiency, the environment and the economic needs of London. TfL should be seeking

to reduce unnecessary freight road and rail use by freight traffic passing *through* London as this adds to congestion, pollution and noise nuisance.

- Business traffic in London needs a fairer deal for short term loading and unloading stops.
- TfL should be seeking to positively influence freight operators towards cleaner quieter and less CO 2 emitting vehicles.
- TfL Rail should take an active interest in promoting the development of freight routes which do not compete for rail capacity with commuter services. TfL should develop a plan to promote freight movement by rail.
- The Mayor should also promote freight and waste movement via London's waterways, including protecting wharves and upgrading canal infrastructure for industrial use.
- There should be better provision of short term parking for tourists and visitor coaches – which contribute to the leisure economy.
- The Mayor should continue to oppose airport expansion anywhere in London. Instead he should support more high-speed rail links as a more sustainable alternative for domestic and short-haul European business travel.

London's Blue Ribbon

We welcome the Mayor's support for increasing the use of the Thames for passenger journeys. However, this is only part of the picture.

The Thames and London's canals have tremendous potential to support business and industry. The Mayor should protect wharfs where opportunity exists for industrial use, particularly for new Green Industries. He should also be looking promote the use of the river and canals for freight and waste movements by investing in supporting infrastructure.

The Mayor must also improve river crossings. He should either reinstate the original and fully funded Thames Gateway Bridge or bring forward a new river crossing for the Thames Gateway area as soon as possible. He must also invest in existing crossings, particularly the Woolwich Ferry which is in desperate need of upgrading.

Black cabs and private hire

London's Black Cabs are iconic and our knowledgeable cabbies the envy of the world. Both Black Cabs and private hire vehicles have an important role to play in London's economy especially in the night time economy. That said taxis could be far more environmentally friendly and safety measures could and should be extended.

The Mayor should:

- Modernise the Public Carriage Office.
- Focus on improving the environmental performance of black cab fleet, diesel engines are disproportionately responsible for poor air quality in London.
- Give higher priority to clamping down on touts and illegal drivers.
- Continue the pressure to licence pedicabs so that their numbers can be strictly limited and their behaviour controlled where they pose a danger or a nuisance to the public.

Motorcycles

The Mayor should aim to promote the safety of motorcyclist and reduce the negative impact upon pedestrians and cyclists of motorcycle speeding. TfL should encourage responsible motorcyclist by promoting the provision of motorcycle parking spaces. TFL should also be seeking to promote the development and take up of cleaner and quieter motorbike vehicles.

Fewer and Cleaner Cars

London's roads are heavily congested. Our air quality persistently breaches EU safety standards and carbon emissions from traffic must be cut by 60%. So the Mayor's top priority for regarding private vehicles should be to get people out of them!

Heavy or speeding traffic undermines the quality of life for residential communities and Londoners want to see public transport be an affordable and realistic option to reduce reliance on the car. Car commuting cannot accommodate economic & population growth. Car use should increasingly become an occasional activity for private drivers and as a consequence driving conditions will be easier and pleasanter for essential trips.

The Mayor should:

- Focus on investing in public transport, cycling and walking facilities in car dependent communities
- Be prepared if necessary to use measures such as congestion charging, road pricing, discount ticketing and reward points to discourage polluting vehicles, unnecessary car use and to promote sustainable travel
- The aim of road pricing should be reduce CO2 emissions as well as reduce congestion and pricing should be related to emission levels
- TFL should seek to promote and support the development and use of a wide range of environmentally friendly vehicles in London – not just electric vehicles. Electric cars must be powered from 'renewable' electricity sources.
- The Mayor should extend his support for car clubs which enable Londoners to make occasional use of a car when absolutely necessary, but discourages the habitual use of cars for short journeys