

# Campaigning for the Brent Cross Railway

**CBT London has continued to campaign for this light railway in north-west London and have been leafletting, and attending summer fetes in Brent, Barnet and Harrow, and updating the Campaign's web site, (for more information see [www.bettertransport.org.uk/london\\_local\\_group](http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/london_local_group)).**

The subject has been raised in Brent and Barnet council meetings, and we have been elected as one of three main projects in the council-backed "Brent Sustainability Forum".

The "transport assessment" for the Brent Cross development will become public in mid-September, which will allow detailed scrutiny of the road traffic and public transport predictions for the £5-billion scheme, (see [www.brentcrosscricklewood.com](http://www.brentcrosscricklewood.com)).

## Completing the Outer Circle

**We have the first Mayor of London to thank for funding the first phase of the East London Line Project [ELLP].**

It is due to open between Dalston Junction and New Cross/West Croydon/Crystal Palace by mid-2010, and then for fast-tracking the Dalston Junction-Highbury & Islington link. This link is due to open in February 2011, to coincide with the doubling of frequency on the core section of the North London Line between Stratford and Camden Road, and all in good time for the London Olympics. The new Mayor now has within his grasp the opportunity to finish the job and open the completed Outer Circle a mere 10 months later. Brokering a funding agreement this autumn, involving his own TfL, the DfT and Network Rail, would enable him to both authorise and open a new orbital rail link within just a single term of office!

The new link's seven stations

include one new one, with all the rest being interchanges with radial mainline or Tube routes - magic! While connectivity in the four directly-affected south London Boroughs will be enhanced, those north of the Thames are no less interested in the new link. With the addition of a quarter-hourly direct service between Dalston Junction and Clapham Junction taking little more than just 30 minutes, they need those extra four trains per hour to boost much-

needed capacity on the cross-river core section by 33%, from 12 to 16 trains per hour, to cope with expected demand.

So who pays? Service changes necessitated by Network Rail's Thameslink Programme works at London Bridge, especially the withdrawal of the Victoria-London Bridge service, will, without a mitigating package of other services, disadvantage some important south London users such as King's College Hospital. Network Rail's Route Utilisation Strategy [RUS] for South London however sings the praises of the ELLP's final phase for providing additional capacity and a key part of that mitigating package of alternative services. The Office of Rail Regulation, which has approved the South London RUS, has apparently indicated that if the ELLP final phase remains unfunded there are potential issues about compatibility with the South London RUS. If the

scheme remained unfunded by any critical date, it seems they would consider that the relevant part of the RUS should be re-opened to decide what changes needed to be made. Serious stuff!

The Thameslink Programme has an agreed budget of £5.5 billion. The ELLP final phase has a capital cost of £105 million - that's less than two per cent of the former! At that price the Thameslink Programme's purchase of the unchallenged benefits, to itself never mind anyone else, of funding and finishing the whole ELLP by December 2011 must be the bargain of the decade!

Write to Mayor of London Boris Johnson, Secretary of State Ruth Kelly, and Thameslink Programme Director Andrew Mitchell, urging them to see sense and do the deal - and please write now.  
[Roger Blake](#), Principal Transport Planner, London Borough of Hackney

Our Newsletter is sent out to London members and other contacts. The group exists to campaign for sustainable transport solutions in London and to support the work of the Campaign nationally. If you have not already done so we would be pleased if you would also join our group and take part in our London based activities.

To contact the group write to Chris Barker, Campaign for Better Transport, 46 Redston Road, London N8 7HJ. email: [c.barker@lineone.net](mailto:c.barker@lineone.net) phone: 020 8347 7684.

Regular meetings of the group are held in central London. The Newsletter is edited by Chris Barker. Contributors are welcomed. Opinions expressed are those of the authors and not necessarily those of the Campaign for Better Transport.

The East London Line soars over Shoreditch High Street, but will it each Clapham Junction?



# Replanning London's bus routes



One of the last two Red Arrow routes

**London's buses are experiencing an unprecedented rise in the number of passengers.**

Part of this success must be put down to the difficulties of driving cars in the centre of the city.

Parking places are hard to find and expensive. The congestion charge puts many motorists off. There are also a large number of tourists and immigrant workers who are less likely to have access to a car. But the practical saturation cover-

age by frequent buses along a myriad of routes must also be a factor.

The huge number of buses and bus routes brings its own problem to central London. Bus on bus congestion is a serious problem. Despite the excellent information provided the maze of different bus routes must cause considerable confusion, particularly to those unfamiliar with the city.

A solution to this has recently been proposed by Transport Engineer Tam Parry in an article in *Local Transport Today* (LTT 2nd May). Central London, defined as an area roughly enclosing the main line railway terminals plus Elephant and Castle, should have a basic network of routes linking all important points at frequent intervals with each one colour coded like the tube network. Like the tube network there would be designated interchange points. There would need to be a drastic reduction in the number of bus routes running through into the inner zone although some routes particularly heavily used or serving streets not served by the trunk routes would need to continue. In some ways the scheme is reminiscent of London Transport's scheme of the 1960s which was to replace central London routes with Red Arrow buses.

There have been several objections to this idea. One is the disadvantage for most passengers having to change buses at the boundary of the inner zone. Another is the need for interchange and, at crucial points on the periphery, the need to find stopping and layover points for the terminating buses.

The issue of having to change has given rise to a spirited debate.

London Buses' view, as expressed by Clare Kavanagh, Director of Performance at London Buses in her reply to Tam Parry, is that inconveniencing passengers by forcing them to change buses would be unacceptable. But this might be less of a problem if the connection did not involve a long walk, was clearly indicated and if it could be guaranteed that any wait for the connecting service would be short. These conditions apply when changing trains on the underground and, although passengers would prefer a through service, changing trains is an acceptable part of the journey. It is also often to be found in other countries where access to suburban areas is by a trunk route, often served by trams, making timed connections with local buses at nodal points.

The issue of finding space for terminating facilities is more of a problem although would not be impossible if sufficient priority was given to it in land use policy. It might not be necessary to find room for layover if the outer London buses merely called at the interchange points and laid over at their outer termini.

Although there are clearly problems with these proposals, it is surely important that the issue of continuing traffic congestion in central London is addressed and this is one way of tackling this and at the same time creating a system of bus routes which are more comprehensible to those who do not regularly use it.

Chris Barker

## Boris - the first three months

**Three months into Boris Johnson's mayoral term, his difficulties in appointing staff have been well documented.**

Tim Parker, the millionaire who was to have been Chief Executive of the GLA and Chair of TfL, has resigned, apparently unhappy with political constraints on his actions. Johnson will chair TfL himself. Johnson's failure to appoint an environmental advisor has finally been rectified by the choice of Isabel Dedring, previously Head of TfL's Policy Unit. This is encouraging; Isabel oversaw the production of Transport 2025 a welcome look at meeting London's future needs, which recognised that car traffic would have to be restrained as well as TfL's and the Mayor's strategies for tackling climate change.

In the policy field a change of priorities is evident not in major policy reversals but in a host of lesser decisions. Here signs are not encouraging. The £25 Emissions Related Congestion Charge was quickly cancelled handing Porsche a court victory (and costs). A consultation on the Western Extension of the Congestion Charge has now begun and the extension could be removed. The planned redesign of Parliament Square has been dropped, as has Livingstone's 100 Spaces Programme which would have reversed decades of traffic domination in many strategic locations. On public transport, Johnson has just put fares up by an inflation busting 6%, threatening to reverse the shift away from cars that has happened over the last few years.

The Mayor has rejected a report

recommending a cable-car crossing of the river and appears to have backtracked on earlier opposition to the Thames Gateway Bridge. He now says he is awaiting TfL's analysis. It seems he's been got at by pro-bridge interests probably in London First. He's also backtracked on his opposition to expansion of the City Airport and continues to favour the development of a new airport in the Thames Estuary. Motorcyclists will probably be allowed to start using bus lanes from the autumn. Proposals to increase traffic flows through traffic lights (at pedestrians' expense) are also expected in the autumn.

On the brighter side, Johnson continues to say he will address transport problems in outer London and strengthen the role of town centres though, again, proposals

have yet to emerge. A review of the London Plan is promised and the Mayor wants a scheme to protect local shops. The Transport Strategy will be reviewed after that. Both the cycling and the public transport investment programmes of the previous mayor have been maintained.

Meanwhile a headline item of Johnson's manifesto - the promise to introduce a new Routemaster - has been taken forward with the launch of a design competition. Schools have been encouraged to take part. This suggests what many believed all along; it wasn't a credible proposal and designs for a bus which must have a conductor and an open platform are unlikely to meet safety or economy standards.

Richard Bourn

# Weaning ourselves off fossil fuel

## Energy Security for the Future

**The good news is that at last the Government is beginning to realise that energy security is a problem for the UK.**

The bad news is that they do not seem to have any idea what to do about it. We are witnessing today, at first hand, a display of "crisis management" to which we will sadly have to become all too accustomed in the future. Government's failure to invest in renewable energy over the last 20 years has landed the country in a wholly predictable and oft predicted state of highly dangerous vulnerability to energy crises.

Last week Gordon Brown was reported in the Observer as promising "urgent action" to prevent Britain from "sleepwalking into an energy dependence on less stable or reliable partners". As the old joke goes, "If I were you I would not be starting from here". The sleepwalking has been going on for a long time.

The UK economy is becoming increasingly vulnerable to price increases and disruptions in the supplies of fossil fuels. Brown's brave protest that "no nation can be allowed to exert an energy stranglehold over Europe" is unlikely to impress Mr Putin, who is clearly determined to seize every possible advantage from doing just that. No amount of huffing and puffing from Gordon Brown is going to have much effect. What we need are our own renewable energy resources.

UK fossil fuel production peaked in 1999 and is predicted to fall in the next few years at a rate of around 5% a year. The consequent shortfall in supplies of fossil fuels will need to be made up by imports, which are likely to become increasingly expensive. This will have a serious negative effect on the balance of payments which is already heavily in deficit. In 2006 the balance in all goods and services was in deficit by £54 billion. If all indigenously produced oil and gas had been imported (at 2006 prices) the total deficit would have been £84 billion.

When the oil price rose to \$140 per barrel Gordon Brown's first reaction, apart from wanting to reduce fuel taxes (equivalent to trying to put out a fire with petrol), was to break into

a meeting of the oil and gas industry to beseech them to pump more oil! Having been assured repeatedly over the years by the DTI (now BERR) that there will be plenty of oil available for the foreseeable future, at a price of \$50 per barrel, he must have naively assumed that pumping more oil from the North Sea would not be a problem. To please him, it seems that the oilmen promised to bring on a small field, a little earlier than scheduled, to produce an additional 20,000 barrels per day (less than 1% of average UK consumption).

The principal sources of fossil fuel supply, apart from Russia, are Saudi Arabia, Norway, Nigeria, Iran, Iraq, Qatar, Venezuela etc, not all of which can be considered as wholly reliable. Any disturbance in Iran, for example, could lead to the closing of the Straits of Hormuz. A crisis in any of these areas could lead to disruptions of supply causing serious and sudden



Tupler

damage to the functioning of the UK economy, particularly in the transport sector. Failure to prepare for such an eventuality could lead to accusations of Government negligence, particularly as the DfT's transport strategy paper "Towards a Sustainable Transport System" does not mention energy and contains no contingency planning for such eventualities.

Gordon Brown's only "big idea"

seems to be to order more nuclear power plants. Apart from the fact that it will take at least ten years to build and commission them, nuclear power plants are unsustainable because uranium supplies are likely to run out no later than oil. The Swedish Government dismissed the nuclear power option 20 years ago on the grounds that it was unsustainable. By 2005 no less than 40% of Swedish energy consumption came from renewables, as compared with 1.3% for the UK. It is strange too that, although the Government is now preparing to arrange for us to pay in excess of £80,000 million (equal to 9 Olympic Games), just to clear up the mess from the present generation of nuclear plants, nobody seems to know what the bill would be for clearing up after the next generation. We just have to pray it never happens. If only Government were able to spend the nuclear clean-up money on micro-generation of renewables then we might get near to achieving energy security.

Reducing demand through increasing energy efficiency and switching to renewable fuels are the two main methods of enhancing energy security for transport. There is little sign of any DfT or TfL action in either field. London's 8,000 diesel buses seem likely to remain in the front line of vulnerability, only slightly behind airlines, which are being bankrupted by high fuel prices at an alarming rate so far this year. Presumably TfL is confident that its subsidy will continue to increase to meet the rising fuel bills and that Mr Putin will not cause any problems. As for climate change – that is another problem. **James Skinner**

## Parking plans mean massive traffic growth

One of the important causes of traffic growth is the amount of parking included in new developments. Campaign for Better Transport has just published research which found an average of almost 8000 parking spaces in each of eight of London's major development areas. When complete these developments will act as powerful magnets attracting traffic from miles around.

Most of the developments are in or near outer London. One of the worst areas is around the main Olympics site. Though the Olympics themselves are supposed to be car free, at least for spectators, Stratford City next door will have over 11,000 parking spaces and a further 6000 are planned at the Royal Docks just to the south (in addition to a similar number already there).

If the new Mayor is serious about tackling congestion and the transport problems of outer London, as his manifesto claimed, he will need to ensure that parking provision is substantially reduced during the planning process.

Here is the list of all the developments researched by Campaign for Better Transport with the amounts of planned parking spaces

Barking Riverside	8,700 spaces
Colindale	5,636
Cricklewood/Brent Cross	8,940
Wembley (exc Stadium)	7,027
Greenwich Peninsular	9,770
White City	4,880
Stratford/Lr Lea Valley	11,289
Royal Docks	6,589

Richard Bourn

### Boris cuts money for travel planning

Indications of the new mayor's priorities begin to emerge. More money is being found for Safer Transport Teams of police and community support officers – but it is coming out of the personal travel plan programme.

### Barking to Gospel Oak

The north London rail line linking Gospel Oak with Barking has always been a poor relation of suburban rail lines in London. One reason is no doubt that it is an orbital rather than radial line. The increasing recognition of the need for more and more efficient radial routes linking points in outer London might one day be its salvation. Meanwhile, surrounded by electrified lines, it remains diesel operated, requiring its own rolling stock and forcing freight users to operate diesel locomotives over routes which could well be wired for the rest of their journey.

Thanks to the efforts of a long-standing users' group, the service is now more reliable, more frequent, better known and better used than ever. Takeover by London Overground in November 2007 also helped. The line now appears on the tube map and Oyster tickets are accepted. New rolling stock is expected in December 2009 although, as now, trains will only be formed of two cars. Severe overcrowding is experienced in the rush hours and this is likely to increase. Electrification is still being ruled out.

The users' group is still very active and there is a lot of work still to do. Their web site can be found at [www.barking-gospelook.org.uk](http://www.barking-gospelook.org.uk). If you would like to join the campaign send a cheque for £3 for a year's membership to the Secretary, 35 Carr Rd, London, E17 5ER. (please make cheques payable to Barking-Gospel Oak Line User Group). Members also receive regular Newsletters keeping them up to date with developments and giving advance notice of timetable changes.

### The end of the cross-river tram?

Boris Johnson, in reply to a question from the arch opponent of the cross-river tram, Brian Coleman, said "I am not intending to spend a lot more money on the cross-river tram". £11.6 million has already been spent and £6 million is budgeted for this financial year. The total cost is said to be £455 million.

"The new Mayor said he would listen to Londoners and that means listening to residents and businesses who are in favour of the tram, rather than just a Tory maverick who is against it," says Caroline Pidgeon, Lib Dem GLA member.

The GLA Transport Committee held a seminar to consider the prospects for the tram on 9th September and were presented with a petition by a Peckham residents' association stressing how vital the link would be to the future prosperity of that area of South London including the deprived Aylesbury Estate.



Investigating a pedestrian crossing during a street audit

## Improving Walkability in London

**Living Streets, the charity working to bring about more walking in people-friendly public spaces, has recently concluded its "Walkability Project".**

The project, funded by London Councils, worked in three London boroughs to improve conditions for people on foot and encourage people to walk rather than take the car. The project has used Living Streets' "Community Street Audits" to help council officers recognise the needs of people on foot, rather than prioritising traffic.

The most significant changes resulting from the work have been in Dagenham, where the Heathway has benefited from a major revamp to improve the town centre. Those taking part in Living Streets' Community Street Audits were clear – "we want a shopping street – not two parades divorced from each other" by traffic. As a result, the council have made significant changes to the Heathway, including:

- ◆ removing 550m of guardrail
- ◆ widening the central crossing outside the station so more people can cross
- ◆ adding refuges in the middle of

the Heathway to make it easier to cross

- ◆ changing the design of the carriageway to slow motor vehicles
- ◆ improving lighting so people feel safer

As well as improving the design and appearance of the Heathway, Barking and Dagenham council have also looked to improve walking routes to the shops and station, so that people are more likely to walk.

These improvements have been part of wider moves to make London one of the most walking friendly cities in recent years. With the election of Boris Johnson as Mayor, Living Streets is working to make sure that this progress continues. However, the new Mayor has already dropped proposals to improve Parliament Square and has talked of rephasing traffic lights to give drivers more time. Living Streets will be campaigning to make sure that the new administration recognise the importance of creating more pedestrian friendly streets and encouraging and enabling people to walk more for short journeys, rather

than taking the car.

For more information, please contact Alasdair Jones, Living Streets London Coordinator ([alasdair.jones@livingstreets.org.uk](mailto:alasdair.jones@livingstreets.org.uk) / 020 7820 1010). **Richard Hebditch**

*Living Streets and the Campaign for Better Transport share a number of common goals and we are pleased to publicise their campaign for walkability.*

### Tackling congestion

Is the mayor softening us up to scrap the London congestion charge? He highlights the fact that congestion today is back to the level before the charge was introduced and suggests that the charge is a 'blunt instrument'. Although he does recognise that increased congestion is partly due to road works caused by utilities digging up roads without regard to the trouble this causes he is using this latest information to scrap the proposed pedestrianisation of Parliament Square.