

# The millions of people who use public transport in London every day deserve a frequent, comprehensive, and fairly priced service

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*More than 3 million Londoners use public transport in the capital every day; without it, London would literally grind to a halt. **Richard Freeston-Clough** of London TravelWatch writes that ahead of the upcoming Mayoral elections in May, public transport must be a priority for the candidates, and sets out ten policies to keep Londoners moving and ensure an accessible, efficient service that provides good value for money for its users.*



Transport is one of the most integral parts of London, and it is one of the Mayor of London's key responsibilities. London's transport needs are constantly changing as demand on all the capital's networks continue to grow. London TravelWatch, the watchdog for transport users, has published 10 key policies to help keep Londoners and visitors to the capital moving. Not all of these involve large expenditure, but they all require a strong commitment to using the Mayor's strategic powers to achieve a coordinated approach to improving the experience of London's travelling public.

As the official body set up by Parliament to provide a voice for London's travelling public, we speak up for transport users in discussions with policy-makers and the media and consult with the transport industry, its regulators and funders on matters affecting users. We also investigate complaints passengers have been unable to resolve with service providers, and monitor trends in service quality.

Our, '[10 policies to keep Londoners moving](#)' has been produced ahead of the forthcoming Mayoral elections and is made up of a series of postcard-sized topics which aim to ensure maximum impact. We have already sought to influence London's transport agenda, meeting prospective mayoral candidates from the major parties to persuade them to include our aspirations for transport users in their manifestos. Readers of this blog may also like to question their representatives on the doorsteps this spring about the priorities included in the publication that affect them most.



Here's a summary of our policies to keep London moving:

- *Frequent and comprehensive public transport* – London is a rapidly expanding 24-hour city and its people need transport services to match. Rail users need longer and more frequent trains, with more spacious stations and new lines to relieve the pressure. All services should meet the standards set by London Overground.
- *A fair deal for travellers* – making sure public transport is a viable alternative to the private car

and this includes ensuring passengers do not lose out with Oyster incomplete journeys. The Mayor should continue to set out his or her objectives for fares in London and consult each year on proposals for change.

- *Easy interchange* – easy interchange from one transport type to another is essential for convenient travel in London and it is important that ‘continuing your journey’ information is well publicised at each stage. Improving major interchanges, such as at West Hampstead and Brixton, would deliver passenger benefits extending far wider than in local areas. The Mayor should promote the strategic benefits of these schemes so that they can be implemented.
- *Reliable and timely information* – technology must be geared up to deliver up-to-the-minute travel information at all journey stages; this becomes especially important at times of disruption.
- *Travelling with confidence* – success in reducing crime on the London transport system must be matched by continuing efforts to reduce the fear of crime and anti-social conduct. This requires proper levels of staffing and supervision as well as good lighting, clean and cared-for vehicles, stops and stations, and technology such as help points and CCTV.
- *A transport network open to all* – in the short term, we would like to see a fully accessible bus network but in the longer term, making the underground (fewer than one in five stations are currently step free) and other railways fully accessible must remain a major priority.
- *Enforcing the rules* – parking controls, bus lanes and other forms of traffic management must be enforced consistently if Londoners are to travel with confidence. Pavement obstructions, cyclists ignoring red lights, passengers with their feet on seats, dropping litter, and motorists driving uninsured vehicles are all unacceptable forms of behaviour which must be discouraged.
- *Walking with pleasure* – London’s streets can and should be more pedestrian-friendly. There are many pedestrian interchange opportunities between closely located stations which should be improved and promoted so passengers are encouraged to walk between them rather than making unnecessarily journeys.
- *A single door-to-door service* – Much has been done to make mainstream transport more accessible but London’s population is ageing and the need for bespoke door-to-door transport services for elderly people and people with disabilities is growing. London’s elderly and disabled passengers need a simple, single service whether they are going to the shops, day centre, school or hospital.
- *A road network fit for purpose* – A coherent plan is needed to address the pressures of congestion on London’s roads which affects all travellers and is forecast to worsen as the population grows and economic activity increases.

These policies will help to make public transport in London more customer-friendly, reflecting the challenges experienced by the travelling public who are all too often faced with unclear and inconsistent information rather than a joined up service. Londoners deserve frequent and comprehensive public transport which is attractively priced. Many of our proposals do not require major investment but we believe that they would make a real difference, especially during the difficult economic times we are currently experiencing. They are more important than ever in Olympic year, when the Games will inevitably place a huge strain on the transport system.

London is more reliant on public transport than anywhere else in the UK. We hope that our policies to keep Londoners moving will help to do just that.

[Download the leaflet – ‘10 policies to keep Londoners moving’.](#) London TravelWatch tweets at

@LonTravelWatch.

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### **About the author**

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