



London is in a mess

Drivers have had enough. Here are some policies to put things right.

- The Roads We've Paid For
- Adequate Parking
- Realistic Speed Limits
- Safety Not Cameras
- Common Sense Enforcement
- No New Taxes
- Sound Science
- Electric Vehicles: A Sense Of Proportion
- Fair Treatment - Respect And Accountability.



The Roads We've Paid For

An excessive burden of taxation, regulation and other costs has been loaded onto motorists' shoulders over recent years, while spending on infrastructure has been limited, and often channelled into anti-driver measures.

WE PAY FOR OUR ROADS SEVERAL TIMES OVER: WE DESERVE VALUE FOR MONEY

In very ballpark figures, taxes collected from UK road vehicle users total around £54 billion, but total UK-wide government spending on roads is around £11 billion - about one-fifth, with much of that wasted on anti-driver measures. It is also fair to observe that London has contributed more than its fair share to the Treasury, and deserves some 'levelling up'.



The different levels of government should:

- Recognise that road users have been taxed excessively, and even if VED and fuel duty are reduced by a move towards lower emission vehicles, taxation will still be relatively high.
 - Recognise that cars, vans and motorbikes are people's preferred mode of transport.
 - Ensure highways authorities provide safe road surfaces for the benefit of all road users, including drivers and cyclists. Maintenance should be cost effective and timely, minimising disruption..
 - Target measures on bottlenecks and congestion, including reversing capacity restrictions such as bus and cycle lanes primarily made to deter car use.
- Cease measures that gratuitously remove road space from drivers. In particular, there should be a ban on willful measures such as Play Streets, pocket parks and 'greying the green' primarily designed to take roads out of service. This is without prejudice to residents occasionally organising street parties to commemorate major events like a royal Jubilee.



Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs)

Also with palliative names such as Quieter Neighbourhoods, Liveable Neighbourhoods, and Clean Air Neighbourhoods. They frequently lead to longer journey times and fines. We insist that:

- No new widespread access-denying zones are introduced.
- Existing LTNs should be removed.

Ultra Low Emission Zone (ULEZ)

We insist that:

- The ULEZ zone is cancelled and London welcomes all drivers of legally compliant vehicles.
- The loss of revenue should be balanced by not spending TfL funds on anti-motorist measures such as Active Travel and LTNs.



Adequate Parking

WE WANT ADEQUATE, REASONABLY-PRICED PUBLIC PARKING PROVISION



- Local authorities should be required to provide parking to satisfy demand either free or at reasonable cost. They must factor in the needs of businesses which depend upon road use and agree enforcement practices.
- Parking and traffic management powers should be for managing parking and traffic and definitely not for generating revenue. Local residents and firms should be empowered to require local authorities to review parking provision, restrictions and charges etc. in their area.
- Local authority contracts should not have targets for PCNs or revenue to that authority.
- Restrictions leading to enforcement must only be used to solve genuine parking and traffic management problems, not to raise money.
- All signs and guidance must be clear. The system must reasonably acknowledge that we all make mistakes.
- Parking spaces should not be repurposed for gratuitous street furniture, such as planters; parklets, cycle bays or disproportionately for car clubs electric and hydrogen vehicles.
- There must be an end to a pernicious policy of 'zero parking developments.

Realistic Speed Limits

SPEED LIMITS SHOULD BE SET TO KEEP LONDON MOVING, NOT GENERATE REVENUE



- Speed limits should respect the practical speed of the road. They should be set at levels that the majority of drivers consider reasonable, taking into account the long proven 85th percentile model
- 30mph should be default for built-up areas, with higher speeds on major roads. Highway authorities should not divert funds to 'one size fits all' wide 20mph zones based on hyped 'safety' soundbites.
- Rather than impede drivers near schools and hospitals at times of reduced hazard and reduce their concentration with blanket 20mph limits, speed limits should be 30mph, but supported by necessary signage, barriers and road user education.
- Cyclists can actually prefer to have drivers approaching at 30mph, as it allows cleaner overtaking.
- Higher limits benefit emergency services, who try to travel up 20mph above a limit.

Safety Not Cameras



“Labour’s army of speed cameras is not the best way to make our roads safer. We will switch to alternative, better, ways to improve road safety. Labour’s dependence on fixed speed cameras has blinded them to the effectiveness of the alternatives. It is time say enough is enough on fixed speed cameras...”

- Then Shadow Transport Secretary Theresa Villiers, 2009 Conservative Party Conference,

“A million tickets a year are set to be issued to speeding motorists in London following a massive expansion of 20mph limits and the roll-out of new speed cameras. Transport for London is planning to almost treble the number of main roads limited to 20mph and wants a “significant increase” in the capacity of the Met police to catch and fine drivers...”

- Evening Standard, 25.2.2022



- Speed limits should be set correctly in accordance with the 85th percentile rule. There would be much greater speed limit compliance, so less justification for the use of speed cameras.
- Historically, Britain’s excellent road safety record has been the result of engineering safe roads, and not ever lower speed limits.
- Speed cameras should only be used when all other engineering measures have been tried. They should be audited at 2-3 year intervals, and must be removed where there has been no proven casualty reduction.
- Alternative and cheaper methods, such as Vehicle Activated Signs, are likely to be more effective in drawing drivers’ attention to a hazard ahead.¹
- Resources should be prioritised towards removal of vehicle-damaging humps and potholes (which seem to be used as a speed control). This also benefits cyclists, ambulances and patients being transported.
- Drivers should not be penalised for giving way to emergency services on a blue lamp, where this involves technical infringements, such as moving into a box junction or through a light.

- The biggest investment in road safety should be in prevention. A key part of this will be road user education, particularly for children. The Highway Code advises that they should not be let out without awareness of the basics. This should also aim to get through to cyclists, who legally require no specific qualifications or training to use the road.

¹ See TRL report 549.

Common Sense Enforcement

WE WANT PRIORITISED AND COMMON SENSE ENFORCEMENT

Enforcement of parking and moving traffic contraventions should focus on motorists who cause significant danger or inconvenience to other road users.



- Local authorities should have a clear legal duty to be reasonable and proportionate in their approach to enforcement and to exercise the discretion of common sense so that trivialities are not punished.
 - There should be a grace period of 10 minutes for pay and display bays both to allow people who only require to park for a few minutes and a little leeway over time.
 - Enforcement should be suspended immediately where restrictions are not lawful and Penalty Charge Notice (PCN) fines should be promptly reimbursed. Local authorities should keep due records of contact details with payments and make the same efforts to provide refunds/compensation as in levying penalties.
 - Local authorities should have to investigate restrictions generating a significant number of PCNs. They should scrap restrictions aimed at discouraging motor vehicle use and for the remainder, identify measures to produce compliance in preference to revenue generation.
 - Lower penalty charges should always be considered for less serious parking violations.
 - Measures to restrict parking and manage congestion should not stifle businesses.
 - A common sense approach to parking should minimise the issuing of PCNs to motorists who make honest mistakes.
- Bailiffs (aka Civil Enforcement Agents) should be used only as a last resort. Local authorities should drastically reduce the number of warrants of execution issued by introducing a first stage office-based debt collection operation.

WE WANT ACTION TO END THE USE OF CCTV CAMERAS FOR PARKING ENFORCEMENT



“Excessive parking charges and unfair parking fines push up the cost of living, and undermine local high streets and shopping parades. We want to rein in over-zealous parking enforcement, so it focuses on supporting high streets and motorists, not raising money.”

Parking spy cars are just one example of this and a step too far. Public confidence is strengthened in CCTV if it is used to tackle crime, not to raise money for council coffers.”

- Eric Pickles, former MP and Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government

- The government must deliver on its promise to abolish the use of CCTV cameras for parking enforcement, consistent with its intention set out in the “Consultation on Local Authorities Parking” way back in 2013.

No New Taxes

WE MORE THAN PAY FOR OUR ROADS: SO NO NEW TAXES!

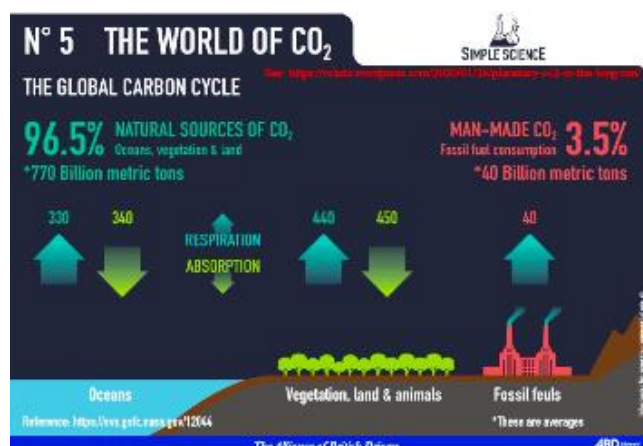
We insist that the different levels of government should refrain from imposing new taxes



- A Workplace Parking Levy – literally, a tax on going to work.
- Any form of road pricing, whether pay-per-mile or widespread cordon pricing (such as the London Congestion Charge).
- Tunnel and bridge tolls.
- Any other taxes for road use, including environmental levies such as parking surcharges or charges for entering a 'Zero Emission Zone'.
- There should be no devolution of tax raising powers to the London Mayor, such as levying Vehicle Excise Duty (VED, road tax) as experience shows that this will be used as a cash cow and wasted on anti-driver measures.
- London should be seen as a national asset with its roads part of a national network. It generates an above-average contribution towards the national economy (Gross Domestic Product, GDP). Rather than being forced to find new sources of income that would penalise drivers, it should get back a higher proportion of its contribution to improve its road network.

Sound Science

SOUND SCIENCE NOT SCAREMONGERING AND GRATUITOUS RESTRICTIONS



Right: illegal Extinction Rebellion bus shelter poster, 2022.

The Climate Change Act ignores science and threatens drastic changes to our way of life



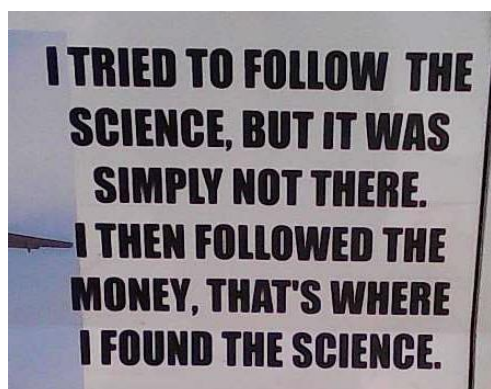
There must be an objective, common sense approach to setting speed limits on urban motorways and other main roads. Consultation proposals for speed reductions sections of the M1 and M3 were not backed by accessible scientific data and failed to recognise that the majority of traffic air pollution is from heavy commercial vehicles and buses, not cars. Of such vehicles, most are already confined to lower speeds, rendering the proposals ineffective.²

NET ZERO: THE TRUTH



A short pamphlet covers the issues. Available via <https://www.abdlondon.uk>

- There is no justification for restriction in the name of discredited 'Net Zero' policy.
- It must be recognised that London's outdoor air is typically some of the cleanest in the world, and it can be cleaner than air inside the home or on the London Underground
- It must be recognised that pollution can blow in from hundreds of miles away and is not readily controllable.
- It must be recognised that conditions such as asthma can be triggered by a wide range of sources and that drivers should not be penalised.



Two web articles on the air quality issue are available on <https://www.abdlondon.uk>

One summarises the issue, the other goes into greater depth. Transport for London and other local authorities are hypocritically using 'air quality' as a stick with which to beat drivers and extract more money.



² "Consultation on M3 Junctions 3 to 4 Maximum Mandatory Speed Limit - Response from the ABD", 2014

Electric Vehicles: A Sense Of Proportion

The move towards electrification of vehicles is controversial. The government has moved to ban the sale of new Internal Combustion Engine (ICE) vehicles in 2035 (put back from 2030), and new ICE-hybrids from 2035. Consumer choice will be undermined by the prospect of fining vendors who fail to meet 'green' targets rather than sell what their customers want.

At the same time, the forced move towards electric vehicles (EVs) is used as a 'justification' for intrusive road-pricing to recoup government revenue lost through reduced fuel duty.



- The government should drop the ICE ban immediately. A survey for the AA indicates only 16% of drivers support it and experts query both the justification (the 'Net Zero' fantasy) and the assumptions (that the volume of vehicles and infrastructure can be delivered).
- Whether to buy an Electric Vehicle (EV) should be an unpressured decision for consumers. The government should end arbitrary targets that put pressure on vendors.
- As the government has subjected the driving public to a mix of incentive and coercion, it should take responsibility for its decision to promote EVs. For instance, local authorities will need to repair the extra wear and tear caused by heavier vehicles. Central government should make ring-fenced grants available to them and check that the work has been done to the required standard
- A specialist task force, such as the Transport Select Committee, should conduct formal investigations into issues such as the potential effect of heavier EVs on multi-storey car park floors and the tendency of EVs to catch fire, endangering public safety. This should address the issues such as EV fires sometimes reigniting days after being extinguished, the release of highly toxic fumes such as hydrogen cyanide and carbon monoxide, and the resourcing of Fire Brigades to cope with the increased population of EVs.
- EVs tend to be heavier because of their large batteries. It has been suggested that their increased momentum could increase the severity of impacts with other road users. The emphasis should be on preventing collisions through good road safety practice, such as road user education, rather than lower speed limits.
- The government should ensure that local authorities address concerns of disabled groups such as the blind, over the possible pavement hazards posed by charging infrastructure.

Fair Treatment - Respect And Accountability



NO 'SECOND-CLASS ROAD USERS. ALL ROAD USERS SHOULD BE TREATED WITH EQUAL RESPECT.

- Authorities such as local councils should be prevented from operating a hierarchy of road users – a blatant excuse for discrimination against drivers. All road users should share the road with a spirit of mutual respect and consideration.
- There should be an end to policies that are aimed at forcing drivers out of their cars, whether through intent or practical effect. This includes the recent "nudging" approach,³ designed to gradually force drivers out of their cars. This is nothing less than politically-motivated social engineering, but it is done with true Orwellian double-speak in the name of 'increasing choice'.

GREATER PUBLIC ACCOUNTABILITY OF THE AUTHORITIES FOR THEIR ACTIONS

- Where public authorities have responsibility, they should maintain auditable records of actions taken to discharge it.
- This should include setting performance targets to measure and meet expectations, with a focus on prevention rather than cure.
- For instance, if the National Highways (or successor organisation) has persistent road works that reduce traffic speeds on a motorway, it should be able to show its customers what it is doing to minimise delays and other disruption, including on similar future projects.
- Such records should be publicly accessible, both in terms of the means of storage, and readability.

NO STRICT LIABILITY OFFENCES'

- Future legislation should respect the principle of innocence before proof of guilt when investigating incidents involving all different types of road user.



¹ Cm8679, July 2013.

³ See also 'behaviour change interventions' - <http://www.publications.parliament.uk/pa/ld201012/ldselect/ldsctech/179/17905.htm>