

# Conservative Transport News



## Conservative Transport Group

### A Special Interest Group of the Conservative Party

Founded in 1992 by Dr Robert Kinghorn

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4



**Transport: where the Conservatives have the better moves**

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The views expressed in this newsletter are those of the article authors and not necessarily those of the Conservative Party or the Conservative Transport Group.

# Chairman's Chat

Since the last newsletter the Transport Group has been discussing transport issues at meetings held every month on Zoom. I have been busy this year preparing for the Transport Group meeting at the Conservative Party in October 2022.

A meeting has been arranged for lunch time on Monday the 3rd of October. A range of speakers have been asked to attend including a government minister - Baroness Vere of Norbiton, Philip Saunders – Flybe, Lucy Rackliff – Aston University & Anthony Smith – Transport Focus

The meeting will place at the Burlington Hotel (close to Birmingham New Street Station) – 12 noon – with speakers from 12.15.

Best wishes - Tim

## Immediate Past Chairman's Chat

### Major UK Issues Notes (v1)

By Chris Belk (VP & Immediate Past Chairman)

The new PM has inherited a very large number of critical UK issues most of which need urgent attention, some with very high priority.

Government run services are widely recognised as being managed and delivered inefficiently. And this is increasingly being acknowledged to be due to the multi-tiered self-serving bureaucratic culture that now pervades our public services – legally saying 'No' is 'job safer'

Some government services do not have 'Issue' headings because they are generically follow-on supportive of government policy and initiatives. One thing is certain – resolving many of the Issues listed below will involve big changes in the initiating body plus many more in supportive services.

A major supportive example is 'Transport'. Today nobody can predict how the mobility of people and goods will evolve within and between cities (and population centres generally) – cars, trains, buses, trams, cycling, mobility scooters etc. And the government and the country needs all the help it can get to move these supportive services with priority in the right direction.

Which is where specialist bodies like the Conservative Transport Group (CTG) can make major contribution

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1. The underlying indebtedness of the UK is bad and getting worse
    - a. Without big national strategy changes UK GDP growth will continue to be low or even stagnate. Therefore, UK GDP growth is unlikely to help reduce the UK's large national debt
    - b. Per capita Britain is almost third poorer than US and fifth poorer than Germany
    - c. Correctly addressing many of the Issues listed below will help (sometimes a lot) with both UK GDP growth and national debt reduction
  2. Levelling Up
    - a. Large regional productivity variations
    - b. North v South v London large productivity disparities
    - c. Big economic inequalities between UK major cities

- d. Mayoral Devolution is an essential component of successful Levelling Up. UK much, much too centralised
3. National Debt Specifics
    - a. HS2 continuation. Practical and economic validity case gets even weaker. And the circa £100bn cancellation saving is financially very attractive
  4. City restructuring
    - a. 20 minute Neighbourhoods (eg Birmingham. TCPA closely monitors the city's planning consultant's progress)
    - b. WfH revolution is facilitating this city restructuring including more local sub-offices in lieu central head office. But will the predicted large energy price inflation temporarily encourage less WfH
    - c. Progressive demise of the car and rise of 'Mobility as a service' incl more buses, less intercity trains, more taxi sharing etc
    - d. Mayoral Devolution is an essential facilitating component
  5. Housing Shortfalls
    - a. Generally there is a large shortage of houses of all kinds throughout the UK
    - b. Urban regeneration
    - c. Affordable Housing
    - d. More homes for the elderly and disabled
    - e. Falling %age of home ownership due to first time buyer obstacles
    - f. Due to rental issues – no fault evictions, health hazards, cost etc
    - g. Due to overcrowding for a variety of reasons.
      - i. One serious overcrowding cause is linked to the serious reduction in the national birth rate (which has been evident for some time) and the consequential slowing of the UK's population growth – ultimately leading to the start of an overall decline in the UK population in 15 to 20 years from now with its associative massive economic impacts. A pending major demographic crisis
    - h. Many Grenfell Tower Cladding problems remain unfixed which creates housing market problems
    - i. Large Home insulation backlog which also creates housing market problems
  6. Water shortages
    - a. Far too many Leaks
    - b. Management shortcomings eg new reservoir planning and delivery
  7. Net Zero 2050 needs massive in depth management, innovation and funding
    - a. Energy availability is the lifeblood of the UK economy so we should be doing everything we can. The generation of wealth and associated GDP growth is inextricably linked to the generation of energy.
    - b. Is NZ50 still a valid strategic policy for the UK?
    - c. To achieve NZ50 renewable green energy is critically essential but that doesn't mean stopping all fossil fuel investments
    - d. Wind (particularly offshore) and solar are very important
    - e. Many innovative solutions need 'green power'
    - f. Green Hydrogen
    - g. Nuclear - Sizewell C, small modular reactors etc
  8. Mayoral devolution needed everywhere in the UK. Central Whitehall resource management doesn't work
    - a. Need to reduce the 'say No' power of Treasury

- b. Treasury 'Orthodoxy' needs to be challenged and reformed
- 9. Lockdown damage was much bigger in retrospect than expected at the time
  - a. And the decision making was seriously flawed
- 10. Dissatisfaction with public services is growing generally
  - a. The public sector is inherently inefficient because of its staff intensive multi-level bureaucratic sign-off structure which has evolved to save jobs ahead of serving the needs of the UK. The 'Vetocracy' culture has to go
  - b. More money is not the right general answer to better public services. In a few select cases yes but generally 'No'
  - c. Policing has lots of public dissatisfaction
  - d. NHS very big issues to resolve (see below)
- 11. Public Sector Pay
  - a. ONS reports "public sector lags private sector" But Liam Halligan Tel 21<sup>st</sup> Aug "says working for state is overall far more lucrative than jobs in private industry"
  - b. Gov needs to end Whitehall retirement 'special schemes' and generally eliminate the overgenerous pension arrangements in the public sector (their structure means disparity gets as worse as inflation increases)
  - c. The imminent extensive Strike Threat
- 12. NHS and Social Care have serious problems
  - a. General and growing public feeling that the NHS 'just isn't working' and that it needs radical reform. But we must avoid a two tier system involving private care
  - b. Continuity of self serving NHS bureaucracy more important than patient care
  - c. Big need for management devolution. Far too many sign off levels
  - d. Should funding model change? (more like Holland or more like Germany?)
  - e. Large shortages of doctors and nurses generally. For example too many senior doctors leaving for pension reasons and junior doctors due to low pay and more rewarding overseas jobs & many other reasons.
  - f. Big growth in difficulty in making GP appointment circa 20% pre Covid and now circa 50%.
    - i. In process the possibility of free blood pressure checks at High street pharmacies
  - g. Treatment waiting lists unacceptably too big – circa 4.5m pre Covid and now circa 7m. But the NHS currently has £136bn of public funding so there must be a lot of inefficiency and waste
  - h. Plus 'Bed Blocking' problems due to shortage of Social Care facilities
  - i. Plus residual Covid Lockdown delays. Large numbers of deserving patients denied hospital treatment during LDs – some still waiting
  - j. Social Care has large staff shortage for many reasons but earnings are top of the list (in June 400k care staff earned less than minimum wage paid in major supermarkets).
  - k. Social care has to become an integrated part of the NHS and has massive funding needs to make this possible
  - l. Excess deaths (ie more than expected) continuing to rise. Now over 1000/wk with substantially more in private homes (cf hospitals, care homes etc)
  - m. Recent 12 months - five fold increase in patients waiting over 12 hours in A&E – over 25,000 in April 21 to over 138,000 in March 22
  - n. To take pressure off A&E too many calls currently being routed to NHS 111 resulting in on-hold times being 20 times too long.

- o. Low priority for the elderly (see Esther Rantzen Telegraph)

### 13. Cost of Living issues

- a. Need to boost investment and productivity improvement measures so that real wages and the economy grows faster
- b. Energy prices (Has the Price Cap had its day? Was Theresa May wrong to propose and action this in 2017)
- c. Restore fracking to ease energy shortage price pressures (fracking output is a possibility by Jan 23)
- d. Measures to attack Inflation (and Stagflation?)
- e. Minimum wage needs to rise substantially

### 14. Education

- a. Restore schools and universities to their proven pre Covid status and continue the drive to make the best become universal (all schools, all universities etc)
- b. The recent Blair education report (Aug 22) is wrong. Gov should continue to support the GCSE & A levels structure, minimise need for teacher assessments and add in the Blair report curriculum subjects that support the Automation and AI world increasingly called 'The Fourth Industrial Revolution'

### 15. New PM early priorities

- a. If LT becomes PM, her priority needs to be on policies focused on returning to Cons values of freedom and personal responsibility and away from looking to Gov bail outs to fix all problems. UK needs to be a low-tax, low-regulation, free trade economy. Above all the UK needs to be actively focused on Productivity and Growth
- b. Strong New open minded Cabinet committed to openness and good public communication
- c. Emergency budget (Sept 21<sup>st</sup>?). LT must avoid being excessively expensive
- d. Energy costs and availability a top priority

UK transport should efficiently provide all the critical and much of the desirable mobility services for the public and for businesses. Historically the record has been reasonably successful but the UK and the world at large is at the beginning of a period of rapid in-depth societal changes.

Living in a post-Covid world committed to achieving Net Zero Carbon by 2050 whilst maintaining the quality of life we've come to expect (or better) is going to demand big changes most of which will require the support of major changes in the provision of 'transport services'.

In this introductory article let's look at what has already happened and what is already on the horizon

**The working from home (WfH) revolution.** A change in this direction was evolving but Covid converted this to a revolution which is unlikely to be fully reversed. The general view is that a form of hybrid working will dominate (maybe 2 or 3 days a week at home or locally). This will substantially reduce the demand for both short and long-distance commuting

Next there is the increasing worldwide interest in the progressive restructuring major cities into a series of locally interconnected '20-minute Neighbourhoods' (aka 15-minute Cities) accelerating as a result of the WfH way of life. Each Neighbourhood becomes a thriving social community with local housing, local business hubs, all essential services and a wide range of social activities (restaurants and local entertainment) almost all within 20 minute

walking or cycling for all able bodied inhabitants. On-line mobility assistance for the disabled becomes freely available.

Paris is well advanced in this urban restructuring process as is Melbourne and several other large world cities. The process is being facilitated by city centre land becoming available for re-development due to retailers closing city centre stores, the downsizing of large city centre office complexes and a big reduction in car parking space provision as car ownership progressively declines for a variety of interconnected reasons (not least the expense of electric cars and which still produce health damaging Particulate Matter (PM) from tyre, road and brake abrasion). If you want a quick introduction to '20-minute Neighbourhoods' go to the 'TED Talk' web site and listen to Carlos Moreno who was and still is a process leader [https://www.ted.com/talks/carlos\\_moreno\\_the\\_15\\_minute\\_city#t-2306](https://www.ted.com/talks/carlos_moreno_the_15_minute_city#t-2306) .

Amongst other things this urban restructuring process creates the opportunity to radically address the very large UK housing shortages and, in particular, social housing which not only needs to be affordable but also must (self-evidently) not be car dependent

And finally the really big one - Namely how to implement all the necessary changes in everyone's daily life that are/will be necessary in order for the UK to become 'Net Carbon Zero' by 2050.

Clearly all the above changes will radically affect the provision of public 'mobility services' aka 'Transport'. Hopefully the CTG can play a constructive part.

# TRANSPORT OVERVIEW

## Membership News

Our year end is December 31 2022. The good news is all new members from October 01 2022 will have free membership from Oct 2022 to Dec 2023 – only needing to pay the subscriptions of £15 per individual per calendar year from January 01 2024..

## TRANSPORT NEWS

### Air News



### An update of News

#### Liverpool

Connections twice weekly with the U.S. via Iceland (Reykjavik/Keflavik) by the airline, PLAY, will start in November.

## **Cardiff**

Wizz Air established a base at Cardiff in April. Destinations served include Tenerife, Lanzarote, Alicante, Faro, Palma de Mallorca, Larnaca, Heraklion and Corfu with Sharm el Sheikh to follow in November.

## **London Stansted**

Stansted has welcomed the inaugural flight of Tunisair from North Africa. The service is currently flown on Mondays and Thursdays using an Airbus A319.

## **Manchester**

Air Canada resumed flights from Toronto to Manchester from June to September, 5 times weekly, using Airbus A330-300s. Air Canada already operates from London Heathrow to Toronto, Vancouver, Montreal and Calgary. Meanwhile Kuwait Airways has started services three times weekly with A320neos, making Manchester its second UK destination after London Heathrow.

## **Flybe**

Flybe returned to UK skies in April with the relaunch of services between Birmingham, Belfast and Glasgow. By June Amsterdam, East Midlands, Leeds Bradford, London Heathrow and Edinburgh had been added. By August Manchester, Brest, Avignon, Southampton, Aberdeen and Inverness were due to be included.

## **Hydrogen**

Airbus and the Kansai Airports Group of Japan (Kansai, Osaka and Kobe) have signed a Memorandum of Understanding to explore the use of hydrogen at those airports. Airbus will provide aircraft characteristics, fleet energy usage, and insight on hydrogen-powered aircraft for ground operations. Kansai Airports will study the infrastructure required at the airports.

Meanwhile Airbus and Wizz Air have signed a MOU to collaborate on studies into operational and infrastructure opportunities. They will aim to understand the hydrogen ecosystem from the perspectives of society, regulation, energy pricing and hydrogen infrastructure.

## **Electric Aircraft**

Eve Air Mobility (a subsidiary of Embraer) and Thales will spend 12 months studying the technical, economic and adaptable feasibility of a 100% electrically powered aircraft.

## **Russia**

The European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) has banned 21 Russian airlines from flying in EU airspace. The grounds are “serious safety concerns due to Russia’s forced re-registration of foreign owned aircraft, knowingly allowing their operation without valid certificates of airworthiness”. Meanwhile several Boeing 737 MAX 8s originally allocated to Russia’s S7 Airlines are now being re-allocated to Turkish Airlines. Aeroflot is expected to order hundreds of domestically built aircraft such as Irkut MC-21, Sukhoi SSJ100 and Tupolev TU-214.

## **Drones**

The German Airways subsidiary of the logistics specialist, Zeitfracht Group, is likely to be an early commercial operator of drones. A Letter of Intent for 17 from manufacturer Wingcopter followed by options for 115 will facilitate a delivery application, especially to ships.

## **Low Cost Long Haul**

The latest attempt to be an LCC on long haul routes is Norse Atlantic Airways of Norway. Flying from Oslo, it began with New York (JFK) on June 14<sup>th</sup> and will follow with Fort Lauderdale, Orlando and Los Angeles. Berlin to JFK and LAX were added from August 17<sup>th</sup>.

## **Space**

Huntsville, Alabama, has been certificated for the landing of commercial spaceflights. At present, this licence applies only to the Sierra Space Corporation Dream Chaser but it will provide a proof of concept for future applications.

Newquay, as Spaceport Cornwall, launched its first satellite in summer 2022, using a Virgin Orbit Boeing 747 for a horizontal launch from flight.

## **COMAC C919**

The Commercial Aircraft Corporation of China has flown the first production C919. The customer will be China Eastern Airlines. The C919 has a maximum passenger capacity of 168 and a range of between 2,150 and 3,000nm.

## **Airships**

The Air Nostrum Group has ordered 10 Airlander 10s for delivery from 2026 with a view to operation on Spanish domestic routes. Payload is 10 tonnes and range 4,000nm though endurance can be up to 5 days with a ceiling of 20,000ft.

## **Maritime & Waterways News**



## **Cargo**

The largest container lines are MSC with a capacity of 4,352,617 TEU on 665 ships and Maersk with 4,242,430 TEU on 729 ships, followed by CMA CGM, Cosco Group and Hapag Lloyd.

The first autonomous electric container ship has been completed by Qingdao Shipyard (with Shanghai Jiaohao Ship Design Institute and Dalian Maritime University) and put into service between Qingdao Port and Dongjiakou Port. At 8,000dwt and 300 TEU the Zhi Fei can operate with a full or partial crew or entirely autonomously.

## **Bulk**

Swire Shipping of Singapore has purchased Westwood Shipping from Japan's Sumitomo. Westwood had seven con-bulk ships and carried mainly forest products westbound between North America and Japan, China and South Korea and oversize freight eastbound.

## **Oil**

Several tankers have been relinquished by Russian operator, Sovcomflot, in response to sanctions.

## **Ferries**

P&O Ferries resumed Dover-Calais services for freight only on 26<sup>th</sup> April, with passengers and cars from 3<sup>rd</sup> May. Irish Sea services, from Cairnryan to Larne, resumed in early April.

## **Cruise**

The existing Royal Caribbean fleet has at last returned to service. In May the new Wonder of the Seas entered service as the largest ever passenger ship at 236,857gt. It will be followed by the slightly larger Utopia of the Seas and Icon of the Seas.

The Russian-financed Havila Capella is laid up as sanctions prevent it being insured.

## Naval

The £2,000m Phase 3 of the UK's Dreadnought submarine programme is under way with contracts awarded to BAE Systems and Rolls-Royce. These will fund four vessels to sea trials, due in 2030s.

The Type 31 Implementing Agreement will facilitate the introduction of the Danish Iver Huitfeldt class frigate to the Royal Navy as the Inspiration class. The two navies will work together on support policy, training and operational tasking.

USS Kitty Hawk docked at Port of Brownsville, Texas in May, for recycling.

## Technology

Electric tugs – have begun testing in Germany. The Elektra uses battery electric power combined with hydrogen and fuel cell technology.

Nodule miners – Swiss-based Allseas Group has converted out of a deepwater drillship the world's largest nodule miner, Hidden Gem of 61,042dwt.

Hydrogen – C-Job Naval Architects of Netherlands is designing a liquid hydrogen tanker. It has a trapezium-shaped hull containing three cryogenic tanks each of 12,500cu met. As hydrogen is 5% of the density of LNG there is no need for ballast water. It will be operated from 2027 by LH2 Europe of Amsterdam to transport LH2 from Scotland to Germany.

Flettner Rotor – Scandlines has fitted a second vessel (Berlin) with a rotor. This reduces diesel power and CO2 emissions.

## Canals

The Panama Canal Authority has proposed reducing its toll system from 430 tariffs to under 60. Rates would rise for passenger vessels, container ships, car carriers, chemical tankers and bulk carriers.

## Rail & Tram News



The main news item at the time of writing, are the series of one day rail strikes. That will do a lot of harm to the rail market and also badly hit the hospitality industry that has lost so much more than rail staff during the pandemic. Two things need to be looked at for the future. The first is that Government must set conditions so that the whole railway cannot shut down during a future strike. The second is that the suggestions of compulsory redundancy by the Government is not wise before Great British Railways is fully established owing to the danger of losing valuable experienced staff who may be required later.

Turning to the launch of Great British Railways, there seems to be little movement. The sooner GBR runs the railway the better, though not at the expense of creating an inefficient organisation. There needs to be much greater visible urgency here.

Whilst it is heartening to see electrification of the Midland main line to Sheffield, it is important that the Government commits to a planned rolling programme of electrification avoiding the expense of stop-go policies of recent years. Electrification using low cost electricity is the most sustainable form of power.

Moving on to power generation, it seems that buzzwords such as 'NET ZERO' and 'Sustainable' may not be sufficiently good for us. Batteries for electric cars and trains

consume rare materials and lose their charge with time. And there is the cost of disposing of them and replacement. It would help to have a fully independent review of all sources of power in terms not only of carbon emissions but also cost, use of rare materials, availability of power in quantity and opportunities for recycling. One of the failures of Government in recent years has been the delays to railway electrification on the promise that unproven alternatives such as battery and hydrogen power might be better. Population increases of the last decade will influence the growth of rail travel in the areas of greatest population increase.

**From a map on a Government web site, the travel corridors where greatest rail investment will be required include;**

Southampton - Reading - Oxford - Northamptonshire - Stratford upon Avon

Reading - Swindon

Bedford - Northamptonshire - Market Harborough - Loughborough - Stenson junction and Swadlincote

Bedford - Peterborough

New thinking is required as only the Reading - Swindon corridor is on a main radial line from London.

**The HS2/IRP solution for Manchester does need a lot of careful further analysis.**

The proposal for only 6 platforms in the terminal high speed station at Manchester does not appear to be sufficient for the proposed number of trains run as part of HS2 and the Transpenine expansion. The IRP does not appear to be fully clear in stating the number of trains, but an extra two platforms at least would be needed unless services were reduced. Democratically, the final decision of the choice and design of high speed station for Manchester ought to be by the city, and not Whitehall. If a city wants a higher quality station to promote its economy it should not be prevented by National Government.

The most carefully analysed high speed solution for Manchester is for an East to West through station under Piccadilly as suggested by Greengauge 21 rather than a South to North route on the alignment of the original HS2 station.

Although the DfT claim that an underground station would be considerably more expensive, the Greengauge 21 station would enable HS2 trains from London to enter Manchester from the West. This would save considerably by not requiring the HS2 station near Manchester airport and about 7 mile of tunneling under Manchester. I doubt if this option has been examined.

The plans for re-opening railway lines closed in the past are most welcome, but these need to be expanded and resourced with greater funds if 'leveling up' of the less wealthy areas of the country is to be achieved.

Graham Nalty

## Bicycle & Motorcycle News

### The case for cycling: health (Cycling UK)

Cycling is good exercise, the health benefits far outweigh the risks and it's easy to fit into the daily routine. If more people took it up, it could help ward off the health crises facing the NHS.

#### What are the benefits of cycling?

It's widely accepted that cycling is excellent exercise: it helps people meet the physical activity levels [recommended by the NHS](#), and it's good for [mental health](#) and [well-being](#). It also reduces the risk of life-threatening conditions that are costly to treat, such as cancer, type 2 diabetes, heart disease and obesity – the latter being a major health challenge putting [enormous pressure](#) on our health services.

Here is some recent evidence for the benefits:

- Compared to commuting by car, cycling is associated with a lower chance of dying from cardiovascular disease (-24%) and cancer (-16%).[\[1\]](#)
- Increased walking and cycling in England could save 1,189 people from early deaths each year.[\[2\]](#)
- According to a study that followed 8,000 school children over a period of years, pupils who walk or cycle to school may have a healthier body weight than those who arrive by car.[\[3\]](#) Happily, cycling is easier to fit into the daily routine than most other forms of exercise because it doubles up as transport to and from school, shops, work etc., and it's much cheaper and, potentially, more scenic, than going to the gym.

Spreading activity across the day or week can help make the guidelines achievable within daily living; for example, walking, wheeling or cycling for daily travel is often the easiest way to get physically active.

[UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines](#). September 2019.

Cycling is an aerobic activity, typically using major muscle groups in the legs, kept supplied by increasing the heart and respiration rate. Another advantage is that it takes the body's weight off the legs, so it's easier on the joints than pursuits like running.

It's also one of those rare, versatile activities that appeal in different ways to people of diverse abilities and ages, morphing inclusively into exercise to suit pretty much any individual, sporty or not. Very small children can master the technique and, if you don't

want to, there's no need to develop the trickier, more intense kind of skills demanded by, say, dancing, tennis or football.

For those with disabilities, several charities now offer both advice and inclusive cycling sessions – as [Wheels for Wellbeing](#) says: “Cycling can be easier than walking, a way to keep independent, fit and healthy, a mobility aid, and a useful form of everyday transport.”

It's your call: do your local shopping by bike; ride to work or school; tour the trails with your family and friends; step onto the top podium at the Tour de France. It's all exercise and, nowadays, you're more than likely to find a cycle on the market to suit – cargo, folding, hybrid, mountain, racing, touring, balance, electrically-assisted and hand-propelled cycles, to name but a few.



### Benefits v risks

The health benefits of cycling far outweigh the risks:

- A famous study from the 1990s suggested that, in Britain, the life years gained by cycling outweighed life years lost by 20:1 [\[4\]](#) – the ratio could be even higher nowadays, given the drop in cyclists hurt per billion miles since then. [\[5\]](#)
- For urban commuters shifting from driving to cycling, on average the health benefits are “about 9 times larger than the risks”. [\[6\]](#)

Indeed, there's good evidence to suggest that more people cycling triggers the 'safety in numbers' effect.

To put the risks in perspective, on average a year from 2015-19 (GB):

- Over a distance equivalent to 1,000 journeys round the world at its widest point, one cyclist was killed and 33 cyclists killed or seriously injured.[\[7\]](#)
  - The general risk of injury of any severity whilst cycling is just 0.045 per 1,000 hours of cycling. (Over three-quarters of these injuries are slight).[\[8\]](#)
- Now, consider the fact that physical inactivity is associated with [1 in 6 deaths in the UK](#).

### More cycling is good news for everyone

Cycling is not just a healthy option for cyclists but for everyone else too:

- Unlike driving, cycling causes negligible harm to other road users (see Q4 of our [10 Common Questions](#) guide for more)
- It doesn't produce nasty exhaust fumes for other people and car occupants to breathe in, or gases that contribute to climate change, one of the biggest health threats facing humanity. [\[10\]](#) [\[11\]](#)

And, in case that still isn't enough, another figure that could well be higher since it was first estimated in 2015 is the economic value of cycling's health benefits: £1,056,598,000.[\[12\]](#)

### Campaign win (so far)

Over the last few years, we've seen many public bodies, including governments, some government agencies, health care providers and professionals, including [renowned Chief Medical Officers](#), endorsing the health benefits of active travel – in fact, it's an argument that cycling and walking advocates have largely won.

### Cycling UK's view

Recognition is one thing, however, but we now need professionals, practitioners and decision-makers both in local and national government to embed active travel into all policies, strategies, projects and guidance.

This applies, at the very least, to:

- public health
- transport
- highways infrastructure
- planning, development, land use and the built environment
- leisure and tourism

Working co-operatively and cross-departmentally is crucial, of course, as is collaborating with [Directors of Public Health](#) across the UK. Adequate funding is vital too.

High-quality infrastructure is a priority because hostile road conditions put existing cyclists at risk and deter novices or would-be cyclists.

Law enforcement and the justice system have a role to play here as well, because bad driving is yet another deterrent.

Turning to planning specifically, Cycling UK believes that all decisions (for streets and new developments, for example) should be 'health checked' to make sure they'll have a positive impact on active travel. Transport for London has produced '[Healthy Streets](#)' advice and a checklist.

As for the NHS, who spent about [£6.1bn on overweight and obesity-related ill-health](#) in 2014/15, we believe it should encourage its [massive workforce](#), people in its care and the general public to cycle for fitness and/or rehabilitation.

The NHS should, for instance:

- Give cycling a high profile in travel plans
- Install and publicise good cycle facilities at sites for staff, patients and visitors
- Prescribe active travel (including [e-biking](#) for those who struggle with hills etc) as a way of combating physical inactivity.

### Assessing the benefits

If you'd like to estimate the health and economic impact of increased walking and cycling in your specific context, see the World Health Organisation's user-friendly [HEAT tool](#). It's designed to serve transport and urban planners, public health practitioners and special interest groups "working on the interface between transport, health and the environment."

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[1] Patterson R et al. [Associations between commute mode and cardiovascular disease, cancer, and all-cause mortality, and cancer incidence, using linked Census data over 25 years in England and Wales: a cohort study](#). 2020.

[2] Health Foundation. [Health benefits of active travel: preventable early deaths](#). 2021.

[3] NIHR. [Schoolchildren who switch to walking or cycling may have a healthier body weight](#). 2021.

[4] Hillman, M. [Cycling – more life years gained from fitness than lost from injury](#). 1992.

[5] See Q16 of Cycling UK's [Cycling Statistics](#).

[6] De Hartog J et al. [Do the health benefits of cycling outweigh the risks?](#) 2010.

[7] DfT. [Reported Road Casualties Great Britain](#), Table RAS30001; [Road traffic estimates](#), Table TRA0402

[8] DfT. Reported Road Casualties GB, (link above) & [National Travel Survey](#) Table NTS0303.

[9] OHID. [Physical activity: applying All Our Health](#). Updated 22 March 2022.

[10] RAC. [A guide to vehicle exhaust emissions](#). 2020.

[11] WHO. [Climate Change and health](#). 2021. See also [Cycling UK's Cycling fights climate change](#) brochure.

[12] SQW for the Bicycle Association. [The economic value of the bicycle industry and cycling in the United Kingdom](#). 2017.

[13] Public Health England. [Health matters: obesity and the food environment](#). 2017.

## Road News

### **OPINION: ROAD PRICING A STEP CLOSER?**

Has the introduction of road pricing moved a step closer? The shift to electric cars means a new source of government revenue will be needed. Higher petrol prices may make motorists more sanguine. It may be an answer to congestion and help the UK hit its net-zero targets.

Sir John Armitt's National Infrastructure Commission is conducting a major review of pay-to-drive schemes which could lead to congestion charging being regarded more seriously as an appropriate nationwide tool. Sir John himself has asked for an "open public debate" about road pricing – still politically toxic (?) but gaining support in government.

Fuel duties are estimated currently to raise more than £30 billion a year. Sir John's Commission seems attracted to London-style congestion charging and to support moneys raised being used to help finance public transport.

"To level up Britain we need to make the congested roads of our major cities work better", Armitt has said. "That can be achieved partly through better public transport that more efficiently moves people about, partly through more walking and cycling and potentially by managing demand on roads at peak times. Congestion charging could play a role in the latter".

CTG exists to stimulate debate; it does not espouse particular policies – try getting agreement on HS2! This writer, however, is attracted to the principle of road pricing. If technology is up to the job and it is not seen as an *additional* tax, perhaps road pricing is the answer; providing any scheme is kept as simple as possible.

### **SELF-DRIVING CARS SOON FOR OUR ROADS?**

Will we see self-driving cars on our roads as early as next year? A £100m. DfT plan to make autonomous vehicles safe says we might. It is claimed the self-driving industry could create up to 38,000 jobs and be worth £42bn. for the economy.

The government, it seems, wants self-driving vehicles to be used for deliveries and public transport by 2025. £34m. will be added to £40m. investment already committed to supporting safety developments to inform new laws.

Government fears the UK is currently behind a number of countries in embracing the technology. Germany has already allowed self-driving cars, a number of US states (Texas, Florida and Georgia) allow self-driving vehicles and driverless taxis have been used in China.

Grant Shapps, Transport Secretary at the time of writing, argues self-driving cars will help make roads safer.

### **ELECTRIC CARS TO POWER GRID?**

The "Sunday Times" has revealed that owners of electric cars will be allowed to sell surplus power from the battery of their parked vehicle to the National Grid. A successful pilot scheme has, apparently, demonstrated it could help protect the country from blackouts.

Octopus Energy Group were involved in the pilot – which showed that it would be viable to link cars to the national grid.

Plugging an electric car into the grid does not create any new power. The car battery, however, can provide storage and release the stored energy at peak times so reducing the

need to install as much extra generating capacity (and help reduce the likelihood of winter blackouts?).

20 Nissan Leaf cars were used in the experiment which was backed by the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy and the Office of Low Emission Vehicles.

It seems a single Leaf contains enough energy to power 100 homes for an hour and the owner could sell the surplus power to the grid at peak times.

Ofgem forecasts there will be 14m. fully electric cars on the road by 2030 (500,000 at present?) and that exporting electricity from cars to the grid would be equivalent to the generating capacity of ten large nuclear power stations coming on stream, helping to meet peak demand.

Cheaper bills for consumers?

### **ULTRA LOW EMISSIONS ZONES (ULEZ) ATTACKED**

Sadiq Khan (Mayor of London) has proposed to extend the London ULEZ to all of Greater London. Criticism of the idea has come from the Alliance of British Drivers (ABD).

They warn about complacency and are worried drivers will not object because their cars are currently compliant and will not be charged. Their argument is that as soon as the scheme is in place rules will be tightened to cover all petrol and diesel cars.

The ABD urges drivers everywhere to use their voice now to object before this scheme “creeps into every city, town and even village”.

### **“RETURN TO SCIENCE” CALL FROM ABD**

The ABD (see above) has called for a “return to science” when setting speed limits for roads.

Their spokesman, Len Taylor, explains: “Speed limits were initially designated to be at the maximum safe limit for the road. We used scientifically proven methodology to set them at levels that would maximise safety (85% percentile)”.

The ABD is concerned that the EU law requiring all new cars sold to be fitted with ISA (intelligent speed adaptation) will apply in the UK; that speed limits will be set lower than necessary to appease political campaigners and that ISA will cause other problems such as “banking, dangerous overtakes and even “rear ending” crashes.

### **SIR WILLIAM WRIGHT R.I.P.**

The owner of the former Wright Group (which grew from a small Ballymena coachbuilding firm to become a world leader manufacturing both London’s “bendy bus” and Boris’s New Routemaster – and buses for Singapore, Hong Kong and Las Vegas) died in July at the age of 94.

The family were local philanthropists, giving 10% of profits to Christian charities helping the poor around the world. Sir William played his part in Northern Ireland politics via the Vanguard Unionist Progressive Party and, later, the Ulster Unionist Party, serving on Ballymena borough council for a time. In 2016 he opened the William Wright Technology Centre, a joint venture between Wright and Queen’s University, Belfast. R.I.P.

### **COMMERCIAL VEHICLE REGISTRATIONS UP**

The latest quarterly figures show a slight (0.6%) increase in registrations to 1066. Single deck buses are up nearly two-thirds whilst double deck buses are down almost a quarter. Ridership levels have been gradually increasing since the end of lockdowns, though are still below those pre-pandemic. It is felt that the £270m. Zero Emission Bus Regulation Areas (ZEBRA) funding announced last autumn is not yet reflected in registrations.

HGV registrations are up 0.4% (to 9,533 units) – the best quarter two figures since 2019. There is robust demand, especially for articulated trucks and tractors. £140m. has been

made available for zero emission road freight to help kickstart the deployment of longhaul zero emission HGVs (40-44T battery electric trucks).

Charging infrastructure for HGVs is essential. It is argued there are currently no dedicated HGV charging points in service satisfactory for en-route charging. The government has announced a new Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Strategy to build a network of 300,000 chargers in the UK by 2030 – leading to a tenfold increase in the country’s public charging infrastructure?

Royal mail have taken delivery of 2000 new electric vans and expect to have 5,500 on the road by spring next year.

### **NEW CAR SALES DOWN FURTHER**

New car sales have fallen for the fifth consecutive month, with the industry expecting this year to be worse than last (the worst for 30 years).

The sales fall follows a slowdown in electric car sales (due to the scrapping of government subsidies?) and a continuing shortage of imports. New car registrations fell by 9% to 112,000 in July (so far this year registrations are down 11.5%, at 914,000).

According to the SMMT (Society of Motor Manufacturers and Traders) sales are down 40% compared with 2016. 20.2% of current sales are electric. (This figure is increasing and is expected to reach 27.8% next year.)

Global supply chain issues are blamed for many of the problems (especially the lack of semi-conductors) plus disruption from the war in Ukraine.

Motorists do seem, however, to be prepared to pay more for a new vehicle and are upgrading to more expensive models. Two of the best-selling model are Sunderland’s Nissan Qashqai and Oxford Cowley’s assembled Mini.

Signs of optimism came from increased vehicle car production (5.6% in June) – helped by the lack of imports?

### **USED CAR SALES DOWN**

The number of used cars sold fell by nearly one-fifth in the second quarter of the year as the supply issues that have put the brakes on the new car market finally hit the availability of second-hand vehicles. SMMT (see above) figures showed an 18.8% fall in the second quarter with 1,759,684 transactions (407,820 fewer vehicles than the same period last year).

The long-running shortage of semi-conductors continues to affect the supply of new cars. Chris Knight, UK automotive partner at KPMG, said: “With the rate of new cars entering the market significantly down on previous periods as manufacturers grapple to solve supply issues, consumers are holding on to their vehicles for longer, resulting in fewer used car transactions”.

Price growth is cooling amidst the cost-of-living squeeze and rise in the cost of driving.

Sales of battery electric vehicles rose 57.1% (to 16,782) doubling market share to 1.0%. Plug-in hybrids are close behind at 0.9%. 95.6% of used car sales remain petrol and diesel vehicles. As in the new car market, superminis are the most popular and black the most popular colour.

### **TO THE POINT...**

- New technology to transfer long-distance lorries from motorways to railways is set to revolutionise the movement of freight and free-up congested road networks.
- Driverless delivery pods could be introduced to Britain’s roads within two years under plans designed to revolutionise online shopping.
- Lorries powered by “green” hydrogen could be carrying freight around the UK by 2025 under plans from BP and Daimler in which the oil group will develop hydrogen refuelling stations.

# Bus, Coach & Taxi News

## Greater Manchester Bus News

### Bee Network buzz begins as bold plan starts to take shape

- First locally controlled buses in almost four decades now less than one year away
- TfGM receives 33 bids from operators vying to run first locally controlled buses as order placed for 50 new double-deck electric, zero-emission vehicles
- Mayor unveils preview of new brand identity for Bee Network
- TravelSafe Partnership activity stepped up to improve safety on '11th district' transport network
- Major campaign set to launch to move more people onto public transport and active travel

With less than a year to go before the first locally controlled bus services in 36 years take to the road, a multi-million-pound order for 50 new double-deck electric buses has been placed with manufacturer Alexander Dennis.

Powered by electric batteries and built in Britain, the new buses will produce zero local emissions, supporting Greater Manchester in building a sustainable future for public transport.

Due to operate across Wigan and Bolton from next September, they will be the first to bear the branding of the new Bee Network – Greater Manchester's bold ambition for a fully integrated, London-style transport system comprising buses, trams, walking and cycling, and eventually trains.

Today, Thursday 22 September, Greater Manchester Mayor Andy Burnham revealed the distinctive black and yellow design – featuring the new Bee Network logo – for the first time, as he unveiled what the 50 new buses will look like.

It will be rolled out across the Greater Manchester bus fleet by 2025, and will also appear cycle hire bikes and, ultimately, the Metrolink network.

The new bus order and brand preview come as TfGM confirm receipt of 33 bids from operators vying to run the first locally controlled bus services in 36 years. The bids have come from nine different operators and relate to 11 different franchises that will operate across Wigan and Bolton from next September.

**Andy Burnham, Mayor of Greater Manchester, said:** “The countdown to bringing buses back under local control for the first time in 36 years is well and truly on. With the order placed for our first 50 new electric buses and strong interest from operators who want to run the first franchised services a year from now, the Bee Network is gathering real momentum.

“We've already seen a positive response to our call for people to get back on board, helped by the successful introduction of cheaper bus fares across Greater Manchester to help residents cope with the cost-of-living crisis and I'm pleased to announce that we have commenced engagement with operators about the potential to cap weekly bus tickets from early next year.

"I am also delighted to unveil a sneak peek of what the Bee Network is going to look like. We're building on Manchester's symbolic bee and Metrolink colours – both of which are synonymous with our city-region – to deliver something modern and iconic that reflects the first-class transport network it will become.

"Our vision for the Bee Network is bold and our case compelling; but is nothing more than our people deserve. In Greater Manchester we are leading the way when it comes to improving intra-city transport and connectivity between our villages, towns and cities.

"The previous government bought into what we are trying to do, and I underlined the importance of this partnership approach continuing during my meeting with the new Transport Secretary yesterday. By working together, we will realise our ambitions and deliver a network that will transform how people get around our city region – not just in the years ahead but for future generations."

Bus franchising will be rolled out in phases, starting in Bolton and Wigan as well as parts of Salford and West Manchester on 17 September 2023, followed by Bury, Rochdale, Oldham and parts of North Manchester from the end of March 2024 and Stockport, Trafford, Tameside and South Manchester as well as the remaining parts of Salford from 5 January 2025.

Alongside new and better infrastructure and services, ensuring people feel safe to travel on public transport and to use cycling and walking routes is equally important in delivering the Bee Network and critical to the future success of the city-region.

That is why the TravelSafe Partnership (TSP) has agreed that it will become, in effect, an '11th district' of Greater Manchester, with significant resources committed to current and future enforcement, engagement and education activity.

With its own dedicated policing unit and supported by transport staff, it will also now feature as part of Operation Avro – Greater Manchester Police's (GMP) force-wide initiative which runs monthly to tackle criminal activity.

In the first six-months of this year the TSP ran 57 operations at more than 40 locations. Almost 30,000 passengers were checked, two wanted people detained and 3,256 fines issued to people travelling without a valid ticket. In the same period, the Transport Unit has made 352 arrests and conducted more than 500 stop searches.

**Transport Commissioner for Greater Manchester, Vernon Everitt, said:** "Ensuring people feel safe to use public transport is every bit as important as the changes we are making to services, fares and ticketing, and we know perceptions around crime and antisocial behaviour can be a real barrier to people travelling.

"The overwhelming majority of customers use our services simply to go about their day and treat it with respect. There is however a small minority who do not do so. Public transport is the beating heart of our city-region that spreads to all our communities.

"That's why we are doing more than ever to deter those committing crime and anti-social behaviour and why are delighted to confirm that public transport and active travel facilities will be included as part of GMP's excellent operation Avro initiative, effectively making the network an '11th district' of Greater Manchester.

“This represents a major co-ordination of enforcement and support teams, now and in the future and is a key moment as we build the integrated Bee Network transport system that this growing region of the country needs, driving economic growth and creating new jobs, housing and opportunity for all.”

Currently around 60% of trips are made by car and 40% through more sustainable travel, such as public transport, cycling and walking. To support Greater Manchester’s ambition to make that split 50/50 by 2040 and with public transport use still some way below pre-pandemic levels, TfGM will next week launch its biggest ever campaign to get more people back onboard their local bus and tram service or consider a move to active travel.

Encouraging modal shift and investing in a cleaner, greener fleet is critical to the city-region’s decarbonisation ambition, and Greater Manchester remains on course to have a third of the city-region’s bus fleet electric by 2027 with all buses expected to be zero emission by 2032.

The 50 new buses will be funded from the government’s City Region Sustainable Transport Settlement (CRSTS), with around 300 more electric buses to be delivered from 2024 through to 2027. A further 170 electric buses, funded from the DfT’s Zero Emission Buses Regional Area (ZEBRA) scheme, will run in Stockport from 2024. The move will singlehandedly reduce carbon emissions by 1.1 million tonnes.

**Councillor Andrew Western, Chair of Greater Manchester Transport Committee (GMTC) and clean air lead for the city-region, said:** “The transformational Bee Network will be integrated and accessible, easy to understand and offer great value with capped daily fares and tickets.

“Not only will this be a significant step in improving bus services for passengers in Greater Manchester, with cleaner vehicles and better cycling and walking infrastructure it will accelerate our ambition to deliver a sustainable public transport system and become carbon neutral by 2038.

“By 2040 we want half of all journeys to be sustainable, and the Bee Network will be the game-changer we need to get thousands more people out of their car, while also helping us make this city-region a greener and healthier place.”

To ensure transport links are maintained as Greater Manchester works towards reforming bus services and delivering the Bee Network, Transport for Greater Manchester (TfGM) earlier this month confirmed contracts had been awarded to save more than 60 bus routes earmarked for withdrawal, a reduction in frequency or route change.

Without the intervention, some communities would have been left with much reduced – and in some cases a complete lack of – bus services, adversely impacting their ability to reach a range of critical services, including employment and education opportunities, as well as family and friends.

**Anne-Marie Trevelyan, Secretary of State for Transport, said:** “People up and down the country deserve a clean, reliable and affordable public transport system. That’s why we’ve provided Greater Manchester with over £1 billion to level up transport and power the local economy.

“These fifty state-of-the-art electric buses will help people in Greater Manchester benefit

from cleaner air, while the additional £94 million we're investing in the area will help to deliver frequent and timely bus services for the local communities.”

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## Other News

### The national strategy for maritime security (NSMS)

Sets out the government's activity to develop national and global maritime security over the next 5 years.

It builds on messages from the [Global Britain in a Competitive Age: the Integrated Review of Security, Defence, Development and Foreign Policy](#) and [Maritime 2050](#) to deliver 5 strategic objectives:

- protecting our homeland
- responding to threats
- ensuring prosperity
- championing values
- supporting a secure, resilient ocean

The NSMS sets out how the UK organises and uses its extensive national capabilities across government to identify, assess and address current maritime security challenges. It also outlines our commitments to meet those challenges now and in the future. We received input from across government, academia and industry.

The strategy captures a range of issues including:

- working to ensure the security of our borders, ports and maritime infrastructure with devolved administrations, overseas territories and Crown Dependencies
- creating a secure environment that limits the ability of terrorist and organised criminal groups to operate
- monitoring chokepoints and strategic seaways to ensure the free movement of goods and trade
- upholding and promoting compliance with the rights and obligations of UN Convention on the Law of the Sea (UNCLOS), including freedom of navigation
- championing sustainable governance of the ocean, developing maritime security approaches that enforce environmental regulations

This is the second release of the NSMS. It [replaces the original strategy published in 2014](#) and addresses new and emerging risks facing the maritime sector over the coming years.

The NSMS is a significant document in setting out the aspects of maritime security the UK deems essential to our continued way of life. The security of our borders, maritime

infrastructure and trade routes are essential to our stability and prosperity. Government's expertise at home and abroad is discussed as well as our values in ensuring the continuance of the international order and freedom of navigation across the globe.

The NSMS should be read in conjunction with the [Integrated Review](#) and [Maritime 2050](#). These strategies set out government's overarching national security and international policy approach.

Source: <https://www.gov.uk/government/publications/national-maritime-security-strategy> - Aug 15 2022

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