

The Transport Manifesto:

Ideas towards better transport.

Written by Simon Fell & Maurice Bennett CBE

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LondonUnlocked.org
Unlocking London's Transport Future

About LondonUnlocked.org

LondonUnlocked.org launched in 2007, focussed on promoting transport in London, and highlighting progressive solutions to the capital's transport needs.

The site features daily news links, sourcing the most relevant transport developments from across the mainstream media and internet, and frequent longer articles, following and analysing developments in the transport sector, carrying interviews, and promoting innovative transport solutions.

Since inception the main site of the *LondonUnlocked* family has garnered significant publicity, pulling in nearly 40,000 visitors a month at its peak, with its news and analysis being picked up in the mainstream media.

About LondonSays.org

LondonSays.org is an independent cross-party think-tank, focussed on leading the debate as to what would constitute a greater London.

LondonSays published its *Alternative Manifesto* prior to the 2008 mayoral election, questioning the candidates' policies on transport, the economy, community cohesion, policing and sustainability. Mayor Boris Johnson, commenting on the *Alternative Manifesto*, welcomed the paper as 'very informative'.

The Transport Manifesto is *LondonSays'* third policy paper. A fourth, on local governance in London is to follow later this year.

About the Authors

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Introduction

We stand at a crossroads with London transport. The election of a new Mayor, a fresh broom in City Hall, and the attention which the Olympics will bring to our city offer an unprecedented chance to be bold and look to the long term in providing transport solutions.

My interest in transport was sparked on a visit to Disney Land in 1968. I saw before me a large space, whose engine was transport of all forms - it was efficient, clean, safe and great fun.

I never imagined that getting from home to work might be more than a daily toil, but I was wrong. The launch of the DLR was met with enthusiasm, the cross-London ferry service grows its customer base thanks to excellent word of mouth.

The chances offered by a new administration and the Olympic spotlight are enormous.

Any opportunities, however, need to be grounded by reality. CrossRail, whilst not perfect by any means, will take a large toll on London's stretched businesses and the Government's coffers. Tube renewal, increased bus and DLR services, and spiralling security costs all mean

that a competent administration will be stretched to do much more than keep its head above water.

That said, opportunities still exist. There remain chances to be bold, and to borrow, beg and steal the best ideas from other cities' solutions to the growing need for extra capacity.

London, and its Mayor, should take this chance and lead from the front - working towards that often stated but rarely reached goal of 'integrated transport'. So much could be achieved by meeting that goal: carbon emissions being reduced; congestion levels quashed, and business being reassured about its investment in London.

The ideas suggested in this Transport Manifesto cover both the routine and the future. They are suggestions, a road-map towards a better London.

We hope that you enjoy reading our ideas, and continue the debate on our website.

Maurice Bennett CBE

Founder, *LondonUnlocked.org*

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About this Publication

This pamphlet was published in its original form as a series of articles on both *LondonUnlocked* and *LondonSays* during August 2008. Since publication it has been updated and expanded to reflect London's rapidly changing environment.

In translation from blog to page much of the original formatting has been retained, with many of the original web hyperlinks having been converted to footnotes.

1. The Importance of London

The move by Alistair Darling¹, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, to set up a working group examining how best to maintain London's pre-eminence as a global financial centre is both good policy and good politics. It is such good politics in fact that Boris Johnson has taken the same tack². It promises an interesting spectacle - the Chancellor being advised privately on the City's needs, whilst the Mayor publicly lobbies for the same changes.

Such contact, however, should be applauded. The City needs the Mayor and the Chancellor to be receptive to their needs - after all, London as a whole provides nearly a fifth of the UK's GDP. However, perhaps for fear of being viewed as London-centric, or in employing false economies in trying to tempt big-business away from London and to the UK's second and third cities, the Government has a habit of not paying attention - CrossRail being but the most visible example³ of this.

The recent mayoral election provided the City with a soapbox to speak up, and speak it did. Many organisations issued manifestos or challenges of their own, with the CBI's *London Business Manifesto*⁴ perhaps the most direct challenge to the mayoral candidates.

LondonSays' *Alternative Manifesto*⁵, flagged up a key issue for business which the CBI and other members of the business community had also focussed on, that of transport:

Transport is key to the sustainability of the London economy. Effective public transport is vital for both highlighting London's case as a business hub, and for realising productivity. The Mayor must continue investment in infrastructure and the delivery of major projects.

¹ BBC News | City Groups Set to Advise Darling | 14th July 2008

² The Guardian | Johnson Acts to Keep City Top of the Pile | 22nd June 2008

³ TSSA | TSSA Journal July/August '05 - www.tssa.org.uk | August 2005

⁴ CBI | CBI Business Manifesto - www.cbi.org.uk/pdf/londonbizmanifesto.pdf | March 2008

⁵ LondonSays.org | The Alternative Manifesto - www.londonsays.org | April 2008

The challenges faced have not receded, and in some areas have only grown more acute. London still faces an uncertain transport future. The base component of London travel, the Oyster card, has been shown to repeatedly fail⁶ whilst numbers continue to increase⁷ on the Tube and TfL's tentacle services. CrossRail - the first major capital project introduced into London in decades - will, by 2017, be at near-capacity⁸.

There are numerous steps which the Mayor and Government need to take to ensure the City's and London's pre-eminence. Some require pledging funds for significant capital projects. Others are more simple - getting services to work together, re-time-tabling and planning around and before major new developments.

A full slate of TfL linked projects are currently on the Mayor's books - CrossRail, Tube upgrades, the Olympic transport plan, East London Line extensions to name but a few - and it is clear that a good relationship with business will be necessary for any new, and costly, projects to be given the go ahead before 2017.

This pamphlet will examine the steps which the Mayor and Government should be taking in building a new London from the streets and buildings which already exist. Beyond that aim, it will look at new projects, and suggestions for their delivery.

⁶ LondonUnlocked.org | Oyster Woes | 14th July 2008

⁷ Transport for London | Tube Breaks Record for Passenger Numbers | 27th December 2007

⁸ The Independent | Crossrail Project Given Green Light at Last | 5th October 2007

2. Urban Planning

Boris Johnson launched his 'direction of travel' for planning in July 2008, pledging to take advantage of opportunities in the outer boroughs⁹. A realistic and achievable policy for a number of reasons, not least as it will lessen pressure on the already-stretched inner-London transport network, this move should be cautiously welcomed.

Key to Mr Johnson's plans for these developments is the following pledge:

All Londoners should have the homes, opportunities and services they need... London's distinctive character and its diverse neighbourhoods and unique heritage must be cherished and protected.

Providing intelligent transport hubs for any new developments in the outer boroughs is essential to sustaining viable, low-carbon communities. All too often, transport does not join up. 'Soft' planning measures - the tying of bus services to trains or ferries is relatively simple to enact and produce benefits which far outweigh the costs.

Many Londoners who live in the outer boroughs but work in Central London itself drive a mile or less to their local train station before continuing their journey. The first mile of any car journey is both the most polluting¹⁰, and damaging to vehicle's engine. Refocussing buses to be accessible, time-tabled to meet rail services, and to have capacity, would reduce such journeys. Small measures such as these can have significant impact on transport take-up. Perhaps this would be a good resting ground for the inner-city inappropriate¹¹ bendy-buses?

Such integrated strategies can work in both existing communities, and for those still in the planning stages.

⁹ Property Week | Johnson's "direction of travel" Points to Outer London | 9th July 2008

¹⁰ Environmental Protection | www.environmental-protection.org.uk/transport/car-pollution

¹¹ The Evening Standard | Accidents Surge as Bendy Buses Take Over | 14th February 2008

The Mayor and Government must ensure the continued delivery and improvement of existing transport infrastructure, and plan for longer-term capital projects which will ensure the city's growth. During an economic downturn the appetite for such large-scale capital projects understandably diminishes. However, a range of new-thinking on the subject show that new developments can be built without costly transport infrastructure being necessary.

Hank Dittmar, Chief Executive of the Prince of Wales' *Foundation for Architecture and Urbanism*, has written about the possibilities of designing new developments and towns in his book *Transport and Neighbourhoods*. From *The Guardian's* review¹² of Mr Dittmar's proposals:

The imaginary set-up envisages businesses offering employment packages for home-based work; and neighbourhood cafes and bookshops being converted to office space.

None of these ideas are pie-in-the-sky but rather a simple re-aligning of the traditional work/home relationship. His thinking tallies with Christian Wolmar's own writing on the topic for *LondonSays' Alternative Manifesto*:

Another way of reducing demand at peak times is to create a climate among employers that moves away from the 'presenteeism' which pervades so many office environments. It is amazing that so far there has been so little impact of the internet revolution in terms of transport demand. People simply turn up at work from 9 to 5 (more often 6 or 7 these days) in the way they always have done without realising that much of what they do could not be undertaken at home using broadband.

That the Mayor and Government need to continue to think ahead, preparing for population growth and shifts, there is no doubt. It would be prudent, however, for these cash-intensive schemes to be matched - even outweighed - by 'soft' measures such as those shown above.

Businesses should be offered incentives to allow their employees to work from home, generating benefits for themselves and for London in reducing the pressure on the transport

¹² The Guardian | Prince's Aide Attacks Labour Over Transport | 18th June 2008

network. Just as biking and walking is now not just seen as an alternative to Mayor's transport plan but a vital strand of it, live/work neighbourhoods and working from home should be part of the regular lexicon of London developments.

3. The Olympic Legacy

The 2012 games present the Mayor with an immovable deadline. In under four years the Olympic park, stadiums, and transport infrastructure which support the London games will have been finished and tested, and will likely already be occupied by practicing athletes, visitors and the media.

Boris Johnson will have faced re-election by the time the Olympics begin and the first starting pistol is fired. Whilst Ken Livingstone will be remembered for encouraging the Government to back the bid, Mr Johnson will be held responsible for delivering the vast majority of the project on time and to budget.

The Mayor has been dialing down the rhetoric¹³ over the potential benefits of the Games in recent months, speaking in realistic terms of what can be delivered¹⁴ for the community in which the Olympic Village is to be based.

What is less clear, is what can be recouped from the Games in terms of a transport legacy. The *London 2012 Transport Plan* details the proposals which the ODA regards as both necessary and achievable. Whilst considerable attention was given to the car-free¹⁵ element of the Games, other planks are far more ambitious. From the BBC¹⁶:

Olympics Minister Tessa Jowell said 80% of visitors would arrive by train. Many will use the 140mph Javelin train which will whisk spectators from central London in just seven minutes. A further 15% would use park-and-ride sites and 5% walk or cycle.

The Javelin train, which is at the centre of the Transport Plan, will go into passenger service in 2009 and will take passengers to the Olympic site in Stratford. It will also take

¹³ The Telegraph | Rising Olympics Bill Prompts Boris Johnson to Call for "greater transparency" | 30th July 2008

¹⁴ BBC News | Mayors Clash Over Olympic Costs | 19th June 2008

¹⁵ AutoBlogGreen | London 2012 the First Olympics to be Car Free | 31st October 2007

¹⁶ BBC News | Public Transport Plan for the Games | 31st October 2006

just 10 minutes to travel from the Channel Tunnel Rail Link station at Ebbsfleet in north Kent to Stratford.

The Javelin train, whilst not ground-breaking technology, would appear - along with the East London Line refit - to be the enduring transport legacy of the Games. The importance of rail to the Games, especially given the lack of nearby parking on offer, cannot be diminished. As high capacity projects go, the 85% target for non-car travel is impressive and a benchmark for future schemes.

In addition, it is not unimportant to the future of other capital projects that the Mayor and Government are shown the demonstrable benefits of a high-speed train system in action. Such a successful demonstration would be a boon to transport planners.

It is important to remember, however, that the Javelin train will have been 5+ years in the planning and building stages, with an immovable deadline spurring construction on by completion. No other spur in London's future will encourage such an outpouring of funds or effort. In central London it will continue to be simpler for Government to look at the 'quick' fixes of adding another carriage to the Tube or putting on another bus.

Perhaps predictably, given the spectre of Olympic overruns¹⁷, many dynamic schemes for transportation at the Games were ruled out. A monorail¹⁸ system, similar to the now-shelved¹⁹ suggested for the Millennium Dome, was considered albeit briefly, but traditional modes of transport favoured.

The significance of a new transport project operating in a high capacity environment such as the Olympics has been lost, and a real opportunity to foster the integration of new modes of transport in London has been set back in not pursuing this line.

¹⁷ GamesBids | London 2012 Budget Bashing Right on Schedule | 23rd November 2006

¹⁸ LondonUnlocked.org | MonoMetro Revisited | 6th September 2007

¹⁹ The Guardian | Sports Academy Tipped to Win Millennium Dome | 15th December 2001

At this stage the most important legacy which the transport projects surrounding 2012 can deliver is one of budgetary accountability. For the schemes to come in on time and budget would allow business and Government to have renewed faith in their investments. Similarly, for the Olympic project to not delay or divert from the CrossRail build or other network maintenance is essential.

At the planning stages the 2012 Olympics offered the opportunity to introduce new transport to London. Now, with plans and budgets fixed, they offer a chance to prove that investment in transport reaps rewards for both residents and business. If successful and those links are proven, that may be the most important legacy of all.

4. *Decongesting London*

The de-congestion of London is crucial and carries immediate and traceable benefits.

Firstly, the better management, and lowering of, traffic density fosters safe and reliable transport. Secondly, less congestion equates to lower carbon emissions, the benefits of which feed both the environment and the economic strength of the city.

The Climate Trust, based in Portland Oregon, have argued for a sensible and joined-up policy²⁰ of above-ground transport which would meet these aims. Mayor Johnson's direction of travel appears very similar to their plans. The Trust argues the following:

This project helps reduce emissions from vehicles by reducing the amount of time cars spend idling at and accelerating from traffic lights. Improved traffic flow and reduced fuel waste from stop-and-go driving will lead to less carbon dioxide released into the atmosphere.

The Mayor has already taken several promising steps in this direction. Since election, Boris Johnson has re-phased traffic lights²¹ in order to cut idling and the carbon intensive practice of accelerating and breaking towards them, taken steps towards making biking safer²², encouraged cycling²³, and also aims to cut the congestion caused by single-decker buses by reintroducing²⁴ smaller footprint ones.

The implementation of these policies can act to cumulatively reduce congestion and aid in shifting commuters from cars onto other forms of transport. However, proper planning is required in order to ensure that the shift does not itself bring congestion. In Beijing,

²⁰ The Climate Trust | www.climatetrust.org/offset_traffic.php | June 2005

²¹ The Evening Standard | Traffic Lights Across the Capital will be Rephased to Cut Jams | 21st May 2008

²² The Evening Standard | Boris: I'll Let Motorbikes Use Bus Lanes Like Cyclists | 26th February 2008

²³ The Evening Standard | Get On Your Bike To Beat Shortage, says Boris | 13th June 2008

²⁴ London.gov.uk | Could You Create a New Iconic Bus for London? | 4th July 2008

unmanaged bike use has led to clogged and dangerous streets. Closer to home, Oxford Streets struggles under the congestion²⁵ caused by the sheer number of buses using the thoroughfare.

Projects such as the “bicycle superhighway”²⁶ scheme offer a genuine opportunity to revolutionize bicycling in London. Offering true links between the suburbs and centre, the development of a true network for cycling in London is a hugely important one. However, as Brian Paddick, former Lib Dem candidate for Mayor stated during his campaign, the route chosen should not simply be a “path of least resistance”²⁷. Such a move would be counter-productive. The Mayor should use his new planning powers to ensure that the best route is chosen for London and its commuters, not just the simplest.

The economic benefits of lowering congestion are considerable. Ken Livingstone signed London up to an ambitious programme of carbon reduction at the C40 Climate Leadership Group. To not meet those targets has an economic cost for our city, and so the importance of switching to low and carbon neutral transport in London is imperative, especially at a time of economic downturn.

New transport also has a significant role to play in de-congestion. This is a topic which will be covered later in this series, though it is worth mentioning that for people to make the shift from private transport there has to be capacity and reliability inherent in the public transport system. Investment in transport infrastructure is key to convincing people that there is a viable alternative.

As suggested in the *Urban Planning* section of this pamphlet, the definition of local communities, new developments and live/work arrangements in the future will hold substantial sway over the demands placed on the transport network. When planning for the future growth of the city, the Mayor must put these issues at the forefront of his thinking.

²⁵ The Evening Standard | Buses Face Oxford Street Ban | 26th June 2004

²⁶ The Evening Standard | Yes Boris, This is How we Get Our Cities on the Move | 9th June 2008

²⁷ LondonUnlocked.org | Brian Paddick Interview | 28th February 2008

Every factor is connected when attempting to force a change in the public's behaviour with regards to transport, and therefore it is heartening that the Mayor appears to be employing a broad policy of de-congestion in approaching the shift.

There remains much which remains outstanding to be done. The de-congestion of London's streets is only one strand in the complicated web which is London's transport network. In order to effect the kind of change which is needed, working in parallel with the strategy of de-congestion, the Mayor must begin looking at infrastructure renewal, pushing the model of working from home, and examining what benefits new transport can bring to London.

5. New Transport

There are no shortage of large-scale projects on London's horizon. Certainly with CrossRail and the Olympics to be delivered, and a major upgrade to the Tube network to be carried out, the Mayor finds his hands full and budget stretched.

Each of these projects have competing demands and run the risk of large budgetary overruns. Good management and excellent relations with the Government are required in order to ensure that the fixed deadline of the Olympics does not mean cutting into the budget from other major projects. It will be a difficult tightrope for the Mayor to walk, especially given that many of the factors which may lead to increased costs remain out of his hands.

However, whilst managing these projects the Mayor must also keep one eye on the future. This article will examine some of the projects which would both fit London well and deliver considerable benefits.

- a. **London's waterways:** The Mayor was elected on a promise to increase river transport and has since spoken enthusiastically²⁸ about the project. There is real opportunity for an increase in both the number and frequency of services operating on the river. Bringing the current Thames Clippers service under the auspices of the Oyster network would drive people to use the river who are currently put off by the additional charges on top of their monthly travel-card commitment.

Away from the river, there are significant opportunities to be found in London's canal network. British Waterways have spoken with concern²⁹ about their long-term ability to manage the cost of the canal infrastructure. An agreement brokered between Government, the Mayor, and British Waterways could see a sharing of responsibility

²⁸ The Guardian's Politics Blog | Boris Johnson's Mayoral Questions - Live | 21st May 2008

²⁹ The Guardian | Call to Tackle Long Term Funding for Canals | 24th July 2008

between passenger operating companies and those using the service to deliver freight (a service which would also help to reduce road congestion).

- b. **21st Century Routemaster:** Perhaps the Mayor's most eye-catching campaign pledge, the "21st Century Routemaster" could actually solve many of the problems inherent on London's congested streets. Replacing bendy-buses with smaller footprint buses such as Routemasters will immediately have an effect on congestion.

The re-introduction of Routemasters could actually save TfL considerable sums over time. The Routemaster, with attendant Conductor, would see a significant cut³⁰ in the £50m which is estimated to be lost each year through passengers dodging fares. Over a short number of years, TfL would make savings through the design and running of a bus which is better designed for London.

- c. **Thames Cycle Bridge:** As covered by LondonUnlocked³¹, a cycle bridge has been proposed by Sustrans which will connect the Rotherhithe peninsular with the Isle of Dogs. Estimated to cost £65m to build, this project would be a much-needed element of the regeneration of Southwark, granting essential health, environmental, and economic benefits to the area.

TfL rightly points out that a £65m investment is too large for them to take on alone, but with Canary Wharf being a principal benefactor, and given the Olympic tie-in, finding sponsorship and funding should be a priority. Relatively small projects such as this can make all the difference to the transport habits of a local community.

- d. **A Big Picture Project:** Lord Rogers' proposal³² for eight cable car schemes to run in the East of London, ferrying passengers over the river and to hubs such as Canary Wharf, is both visionary and practical. Whilst such a bold re-imagining of London's transport

³⁰ LondonUnlocked.org | Doing the Sums | 14th March 2008

³¹ LondonUnlocked.org | Projects: Thames Bridge | 9th August 2007

³² The Times | Mayor's Cable Car Plan for Thames | 6th July 2008

requirements may seem flippant during an economic downturn, it is important that such schemes are not pushed under the carpet.

Cable cars have again featured in the plans for the Beckton - Thamesmead crossing³³. It is the Mayor's responsibility to look at similar projects around the world and establish their credibility, delivery and return. To write-off such a project simply as it remains untried in London would be speaks of a lack of vision on City Hall's part.

The delivery of such projects, no matter how small, are essential to challenging the established norms. Simply put, there is little extra capacity to be had on the Tube. Beyond adding another carriage or improving signaling again, there will be little benefit for an ever-growing population. Projects such as this offer alternatives. Small pilot schemes, delivered on budget and on time prove that they are workable solutions to an ever-evolving problem.

These four projects offer pointers to genuine transport alternatives which would have profound effects on their local communities and to London as a whole. Each have their benefits and their flaws, but each also offer a viable alternative to the established wisdom.

Too often it is repeated that a scheme is too expensive, or untried and therefore will not be progressed. With the Routemaster, the Mayor stood up to his critics and launched a competition to design a bus which will be put into service. City Hall should be bold enough to take the same approach elsewhere, identifying areas where there is a need, and allowing for innovative companies to tender to design and build a project.

London needs to keep moving. Transport hubs, whilst important, are irrelevant if the traffic reaching them has ground to a halt. Careful planning and surgically chosen schemes such as the above could make all the difference.

³³ Newham Recorder | Cable Car is the New Alternative to Bridge | 28th June 2008

6. London's Airports

"London's airports are a mess."

That statement is not just the judgement of this paper, but also that of Steve Ridgeway³⁴ and Andy Harrison³⁵, the Chief Executives of Virgin Atlantic and Easyjet respectively.

That the sentiment comes from operators at both ends of the price/service spectrum is telling.

The basis of their argument is that the stranglehold which BAA has over London's airports, is unfair and stifles competition. There is unprecedented unity on the subject, with BA, Virgin, Easyjet, BMI and RyanAir having spoken out in similar terms on the subject.

The Competition Commission has stated in its enquiry into BAA that it considers neither airlines nor passengers to be served by the fact that Heathrow, Gatwick and Stanstead (regarded as London's three main airports) are under its control. The provisional report³⁶, released only recently, suggests that breaking up the monopoly will be on the cards.

Having one company in such a position of power is bad for business, bad for Government and bad for the travelers who have no choice but to use those airports. As has been widely reported³⁷, BAA's stranglehold has led many to believe that it is handled with kid gloves by both Government and the Civil Aviation Authority.

The solution to these challenges is the breaking of BAA's stranglehold - certainly doing so would provide a much-needed fillip to the industry. Only by introducing true competition in London's airport market will we really know where extra capacity lies, and where expansion is needed. Basing plans for a third runway at Heathrow on a skewed model is nonsensical.

³⁴ The Times | Angry Airlines Call for Break Up of BAA | 12th March 2008

³⁵ Travel Weekly | Angry Airlines Demand Break Up of BAA | 11th March 2008

³⁶ AP | BAA may have to sell 3 of its 7 UK Airports | 20th August 2008

³⁷ The Economist | Turbulence Ahead | 24th April 2008

Returning to the initial quote, the reasons behind London's burgeoning airport problem are clear to see.

BAA's last annual review states that 67.3m passengers passed through Heathrow in 2006/7. That number will only grow with the roll-out of a full Terminal 5 service. Experts have long argued that Heathrow is sited in the wrong location³⁸, a hangover from the days of the airport being a military strip, causing infrastructure installation and growth problems. Combined with the fixed low landing charges³⁹ (forcing BAA to rely on retail trade and thus compromising space and extra security channels) this creates a perfect storm for London's main airport.

Therefore, there are two areas which should be considered a priority when considering the future of London's airports - transport to the terminal buildings themselves, and managing capacity once there.

As we have argued, until there is true competition between London's airports we cannot know what capacity is inherent in the current infrastructure. The Government's first move should be to approve the results of the Competition Commission's enquiry and open up the airport market.

Secondly, London's airports should be able to raise their landing charges, reducing reliance on retail trade and thereby improving the speed and experience of security checks.

Moving people to airports provides a significant logistical challenge. The Heathrow and Gatwick Express trains are to be applauded for their regular and reliable services. However, until the Government can offer more to incentivise journeys via public transport a significant number of people will continue to travel to airports by car.

³⁸ The Times | Why Heathrow is a Terminal Case | 28th February 2008

³⁹ The Economist | The Man Who Bought Trouble | 5th July 2007

Brian Paddick, Lib Dem candidate for Mayor, announced⁴⁰ a policy of using Farringdon station as an air-terminal, allowing early check-in of bags before travel. Coupled with the re-introduction of such a service at Paddington, a significant shift towards the usage of public transport could be achievable. As has been shown in Hong Kong, the early check-in service offers a strong incentive for travellers to use public transport.

Policies need to be geared towards 'full service' strategies - rewarding those using public transport with the option of checking in early, giving them more time to get to the airport, and reducing the constraints inherent in the travelling process.

Government must look seriously at the introduction of high-speed rail links between and from London airports. With the potential break-up of a BAA monopoly such schemes may be intuitive and championed by both airlines and airport operators. However, serious thought should begin now on their viability and cost.

There has been much discussion of introducing high-speed rail⁴¹ links direct from London airports to the rest of the country. Such schemes would be worthwhile not only for their value as part of a modern rail network, but also in meeting carbon targets in the coming years.

This paper takes the position that the Competition Commission's report into London's Airports should be upheld and airports deregulated. After a period of settling, city rail and check-in links should be reinstated, and high speed rail run to our busiest airports.

Finally however, there is another option, and one worthy of serious consideration: Heathrow-on-Sea⁴².

⁴⁰ The Evening Standard | Paddick: I'll Bring In Green Tram Network | 7th April 2008

⁴¹ The Telegraph | Rail Line to Link Heathrow to Continent Proposed | 23rd July 2008

⁴² New Civil Engineer | Johnson's Thames Estuary Airport Plan Welcomed | 13th January 2008

The Thames Estuary offers a fresh start for London's airports. A true 21st century airport, complete with high-speed rail links to the capital and beyond is within grasp and favoured by the current Mayor.

Given its location, aircraft could operate 24 hours a day, and transport infrastructure be built to link to the nearest communities, all out of the reach of flight-paths. Given that the building of a third runway at Heathrow will cost £13bn, the £7.6 - 13.9bn cost⁴³ of a custom built airport makes it an appealing prospect.

Before any decision is made, the Competition Commission's ruling should be respected and the market be allowed to settle organically afterwards. However, with a positive Mayor in place and the myriad of opportunities offered by such a fresh start on the table, this may be the ideal opportunity for such a project to go forward.

Paris, New York and Hong Kong have all moved their major airports without significant hiccups, delivering better alternatives for business and consumers alike. The Mayor, and Government, should look to their examples and aim to improve on the experience which is air travel in today's London.

⁴³ The Times | Boris Johnson Airs Plan for Heathrow-on-Sea | 10th February 2008

7. Conclusion

The Mayor has his hands full. In delivering projects as diverse as the Olympics, CrossRail, East London Line extensions, Tube upgrades and a major bike rental scheme for London, discipline is needed to ensure that all are completed on time and on budget. This is not an easy task. In the case of many of these schemes, the chances of overruns are high and sometimes remain out of the Mayor's hands.

However, despite the number of significant capital schemes currently in delivery, there is no room for complacency when looking at London's transport future.

London continues to grow at a substantial pace. The Mayor's own figures⁴⁴ estimate the city to grow by 700,000 people by 2016 - the year before CrossRail comes on stream. Already the transport network creaks⁴⁵ in places, and the predicted influx of new residents will have to be well managed as to not bring the situation to crisis.

Significant headway can be made on the existing network through upgrade work and the tying together of different services. In managing the transition from car to bike and bus travel, the Mayor's office is already concentrating on the strain that such shifts would put on the network as it stands. Such efforts are admirable.

However, the extra capacity granted by CrossRail, Tube upgrades, Javelin and new East London Line services will not last forever. CrossRail - first mooted by Brunel in the 1840's - will have taken almost 150 years from first utterance to finished product. The modern incarnation of the project will have taken 43 years to get running by the time the first passengers board.

The Mayor and Government need to look seriously at the long term development of London, and to start planning for it now. Such planning means the following:

⁴⁴ London.gov.uk | Planning for London's Growth | March 2002

⁴⁵ The Times | Transport System London's Sole Worry | 23rd May 2008

- working with Business to change the culture of 'presenteeism' and to allow employees to work from home
- engaging developers to include genuine live/work opportunities in the new communities which they build
- tying together the strands of TfL's network to ensure that all pull in the same direction to reduce congestion
- looking at relatively low-cost, local, projects which will have a considerable effect on local transport trends
- considering what follows CrossRail. Looking at large-scale projects which not only transport people across London, but the centre too
- making the case for a new airport for London, connected with high-speed rail links to the sister airports, central London, and other major cities.
- considering bold transport solutions which are currently not part of London's transport network, and allowing developers to bid for the chance to design and build them.

These are not small challenges, but in aiming for a efficient 21st century solution to the transport problems faced by London, they should be met.

It is only through the able management of the existing network combined with the introduction of new transport mediums - better suited for a city which aims to be low-carbon⁴⁶ - that the increasing strain placed upon London can be managed.

⁴⁶ Greenpeace UK | Ken's Low Carbon London | 20th March 2006

Such lofty plans require funding, and this is why it is essential that the Mayor proves capability in holding the budgets and timelines of the major capital projects which he currently guides under control. Excellent, mutually understood relationships with Business and Government are necessary to get the best deal for London, and the best deal for those who work and employ here.

2012 brings the Olympics, 2017 Crossrail. What follows that should already be the subject of fervoured discussion at City Hall. If it isn't, then that discussion must start, now.