Governance Committee



Impact of our influencing activity Q3 2018/19

Agenda item: 7b Date: 12 February 2019

1. Introduction

This report outlines the impact we have made through our influencing activity: in the media, through social media and our website and at meetings we have attended. The statistics refer to the third quarter of 2018/19 but some items have been updated to cover more recent activity.

This quarter we made an impact in a number of areas including:

- Getting walkable interchanges included on the London Rail and Tube services map
- Getting the map to show Blackfriars National Rail station beside the Thames with both its north and south entrances
- Widescale London bus changes proposed by TfL
- Roads pricing
- Improving public transport access to airports

As this will be the first report for incoming members, we have given more background information to put our work into context. This report also includes a section on our communications priorities for the next few months and the key associated messages.

2. Our communications work

2.1 Inclusion of walkable interchanges on the London Rail & Tube Services map

What was the issue?

Across London, there are many stations which are linked by just a short walk but passengers were often unaware that they could make easy and useful interchanges between them as they were not shown on maps produced by TfL and train operators. Examples include a 5 minute walk between Finchley Road and Frognal & Finchley Road stations which enables a change between the North London and the Metropolitan lines and a few minutes walk between Seven Sisters and South Tottenham stations which enables easy interchange between the Gospel Oak to Barking and Victoria lines.

What did we do?

London TravelWatch has been pressing TfL and rail operators for a number of years to show on their maps where passengers can make easy and useful interchanges between stations, most notably in its 2015 Interchange Matters report.

What was the outcome?

Finally this pressure led to a meeting with TfL's marketing team who accepted our suggestions. The latest edition of the London's Rail and Tube map published in December 2018 clearly shows which stations are linked by just a short walk for the first time, helping save thousands of people time and money and reduce crowding. It also shows Blackfriars National Rail station beside the Thames with both its north and south entrances.

The changes were picked up in an article in the Evening Standard (which has a daily print circulation of 900,000, a daily readership of 1.6m and 600,000 unique daily visitors to its website).

Next steps

We will continue to push for improvements to signage and information available for passengers at interchanges as part of our *interchange matters* work. We also now have twice yearly meetings with TfL's marketing team to fit in with their planning cycle.

2.2 Widescale London bus changes proposed by TfL

What was the issue?

Transport for London proposed a wide range of changes to London's bus network affecting a total of 33 routes. Altogether, these represented the most fundamental changes to the bus network for a generation.

What did we do?

- Given the scale of the changes and potential upheaval for passengers we
 decided to hold a public meeting on 23 October dedicated to the issue to
 give local user groups the chance to make their views known to TfL.
- After the CEO met Rupa Huq (MP for Ealing Central and Acton) at an event we agreed to hold a joint bus summit at Westminster focusing on how the changes would affect Ealing, particularly because of the potential impact of Crossrail on bus services in the area.

We then used the feedback we received at these events as background for our submission to the consultation.

What was the outcome?

Both events were well attended and successfully demonstrated to TfL the level of feeling among bus passengers and the communities that the affected routes serve.

The bus consultation event on 23 October was attended by representatives from TfL, a number of user groups and interested parties, and several London councils, including elected members. The Ealing bus summit meeting was attended by representatives of all three Ealing parliamentary constituencies, TfL, bus operating companies and over 40 local bus users.

TfL appeared receptive to the points raised and the points we made in our submission to their consultation.

We 'live-tweeted' from both events and got some good engagement with those who were following on Twitter.

We also took part in an interview on the consultation which aired on the BBC's Sunday Politics show on 18 November. Viewing figures are not available for the London segment but the programme as a whole has 900,000 viewers each week.

We received coverage in the trade press, in articles in Local Transport Today magazine which has 20,000 print subscribers and 20,000 subscribers to its online content respectively and Passenger Transport magazine, which has over 200,000 visits to its website each year (they are not audited by the ABC so circulation figures are unknown).

It is likely that TfL will finalise the changes they will be making to the network in February so they can be implemented in the spring picking up on the points made about the delays.

Next steps

We will maintain contact with Rupa Huq's office and hope to jointly influence Ealing Council to enforce bus priority measures.

2.3 Roads pricing

What was the issue?

For the last few years we have been calling for consideration of roads pricing to enable London's roads to make best use of scarce capacity. This is likely to be an issue in the next Mayoral elections.

What did we do?

We chose roads pricing as the topic for our latest Ruth Thompson Memorial lecture with the aim of generating debate and moving the issue up the agenda for London's decision-makers. Our speaker, transport economist, Paul Buchanan discussed how roads pricing could help to improve traffic flow on the UK's roads.

What was the outcome?

The event was well attended by 50 well informed participants from a wide range of organisations. It generated a good debate among attendees and also among those following the live tweets on Twitter.

The event was also covered in Transport Professional (the magazine of the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation, which has 16,000 members and 12,500 weekly newsletter subscribers).

Next steps

At the start of 2019/20, we will carry out secondary research to understand the potential impact of measures such as road charging on different groups. We will use this to help press for a planned and co-ordinated approach to reduce road traffic demand. This will then feed into our transport user priorities for lobbying mayoral candidates.

2.4 Improving access to airports

What was the issue?

There have been several improvements to access to London's airports by public transport since we published our report in 2014, many of which have been as a result of our influence. However, we wanted to see what had changed since our last report and make recommendations for operators and service providers which would make journeys easier for passengers.

What did we do?

We published our updated report on 18 January. It highlighted the fact that the proportion of passengers travelling to Heathrow, Gatwick and Luton by public transport fell between 2012 and 2016 and the 16,000 penalty fares being issued to people who often mistakenly tried to use Oyster/contactless to get to Stansted.

What was the outcome?

We secured good coverage in the Evening Standard, the Independent (which has over 5m website views every day) and Passenger Transport magazine. There were also some very positive quotes in an article in the East Anglian Daily Times. The Department for Transport said it was 'committed to extending pay-as-you-go across the rail network, and [we] are working with TfL to explore these proposals.' Greater Anglia pledged to 'consider [customer's] feedback relating to the use of Oyster and contactless on other areas of our network'.

The report was also picked up by various chambers of commerce and generated a press release issued by Heathrow Southern Railway.

Next steps

We will use our report as the basis for further discussions with operators and politicians with one of our key priorities being to secure the extension of Oyster/contactless to Stansted. We will also base our next *interchange matters* seminar on this. In addition, we plan a survey on our website to encourage people to tell us about their own journeys to the airport to supplement our evidence base.

3. Other media coverage

We received a wide range of coverage in the local press on the consultation we ran on Arriva Rail London's proposals to close ticket offices at 51 London Overground stations. We also featured in articles in City Am (which has daily print circulation of over 90,000 and 1.2m unique daily visitors to its website) and Rail Technology Magazine (which has a monthly circulation of almost 9,000 and 90,000 website visitors a month).

We were mentioned in several articles on the new Rail Passenger Ombudsman scheme including on Money Saving Expert, the UK's biggest consumer website, which has around 15 million users a month.

4. Forthcoming communications priorities and messages

In recent years our communications activity has, out of necessity been driven by taking opportunities for publicity when they arise and piggybacking on the work of others.

Key communications areas going forward can be broadly grouped into three categories below: core areas where we will focus our proactive communications efforts over the next few months; areas where we are ready to enter the debate when the opportunity arises and areas where we can use Board meetings to set the agenda. Many of these are areas where we have previously made an impact.

5. Meetings with key stakeholders

As we have no formal powers we use our influence to achieve results for passengers. Senior industry figures are required to meet us and we hold regular meetings in confidence which are an efficient way of pushing items and gathering intelligence. As well as attending strategic events to represent London TravelWatch, we also take opportunities that arise to meet key people at smaller events.

During the third quarter of 2018/19, we met Wimbledon MP, former transport minister, Stephen Hammond and had an introductory meeting with Nusrat Ghani MP, Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State at the Department for Transport. We also followed up the previous quarter's meeting with Shadow Secretary of State for Transport, Andy McDonald's advisor, Ian Taylor. Full details are included in the appendix to this report. We have also had a number of meetings with transport operators.

6. Events

On 23 October we held a successful engagement event focusing on TfL's proposed changes to the London bus network. There were a wide range of attendees including officers and members from local authorities, members of campaign groups and individuals with an interest in the changes.

On 5 November we hosted the third annual Ruth Thompson Memorial Lecture. Transport economist, Paul Buchanan gave a lecture on roads pricing which was well received by attendees including London Assembly Member Caroline Russell (national transport spokesperson for the Green Party), who was very complimentary.

On 3 December we held a joint passenger engagement event in Parliament with Rupa Huq MP (Ealing Central and Acton) to discuss TfL's proposed changes to bus routes across Ealing. Those in attendance included representatives from TfL, MPs from all three Ealing constituencies and over 40 local bus users.

We have two events coming up in February. On Tuesday 19 February we will be holding our *Interchange Matters* seminar in London's Living Room at City Hall. The keynote speaker will be Shashi Verma, Chief Technology Officer and Director of Customer Experience at Transport for London. On 25 February we will be holding two events for MPs at Westminster. These will be held jointly with the Rail Delivery Group and tie in with the publication of the findings from their *Easier Fares* consultation. One session will be for central London MPs and will be chaired by Bob Neill MP and the other will be for MPs representing commuter belt constituencies, which will be chaired by Michael Fallon MP.

7. Social media

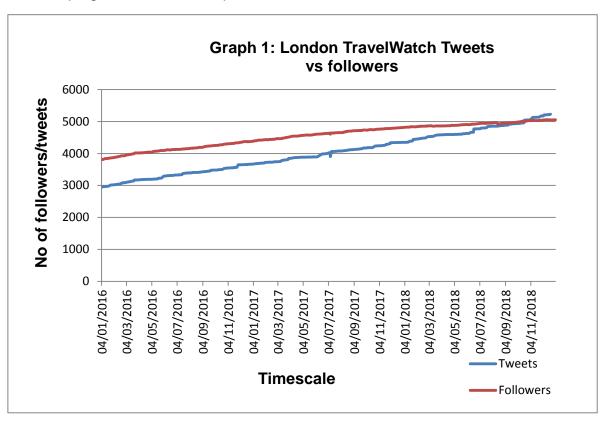
We use Twitter to promote our press releases and new content on the website and share photos and graphics which illustrate the work we are doing. We also 'live tweet' from our public meetings and events to enable those who are not able to make it in person to engage with us via Twitter. We use Twitter to get feedback from passengers on particular issues such as when we did an audit of bus stations and we have held '#askLTW' Twitter question and answer sessions aimed at bus users as we feel there are fewer channels for them to make their views known. During the Christmas period we used a series of scheduled tweets to remind people to check before they travelled and to renew their season tickets before 2 January to save money. If we attend events where they are using a Twitter hashtag we take opportunities to get involved in the debate. Discussions with the member champion for the website and social media help generate new ideas which can be developed.

We use YouTube videos to bring key pieces of work to life and giving different staff the opportunity to record a video helps show that we have a diverse and engaged workforce.

In the third quarter of 2018/19, our Twitter followers increased by 1.45 per cent, from 4981 to 5,053, compared with a 0.2 per cent increase the previous quarter. Progress is shown in the graph below. The number of tweets has overtaken the number of followers for the first time since 2012 but this is not surprising given the large number of live tweets and interaction from our three successful events at the end of 2018. For every Twitter account we follow we are followed by an average of 2.48 users (2.45 last quarter).

We received a total of 180 retweets and 252 likes in the third quarter of 2018/19, on a variety of topics including our Board and Policy meetings, travelling around London over the festive period and the proposed closure of 51 Arriva Rail London ticket offices. We continued to 'live tweet' from our public meetings.

Our Kred score at the end of the third quarter was 759. Kred uses a scale of 0-1,000 with scores above 700 being considered good. Previously it was 755. Transport Focus currently have a score of 795, London Councils are on 802 and Campaign for Better Transport are on 792.



The 'word cloud' below shows the most popular words used in tweets involving London TravelWatch in the third quarter of 2018/19. The more a certain word is used, the larger it is in the cloud.

journey bus london changes train policy buchanan issues trains rail

latest transport details haines watchdog services consultation travel

Passengers access mark plans tfl discussing fares brown offices stations routes route pavements board timetable buses operator tube staff travelwatch ticket pleased interchange airport points passenger performance

The 'mention map' included in appendix 3 shows the people who have connected with us on Twitter during the past three months, their connections and popular associated hashtags.

Over the past quarter, our tweets received 205,652 impressions (the total number of times tweets are seen by users [although they don't necessarily click on the links and this includes repeat views]). This compares to 113,446 impressions in the previous quarter. The most popular tweets were from our Board meeting on 23 October, from our October bus consultation event and the Ealing bus summit.

Another way of measuring the impact of our activity on Twitter is to look at our engagement rate, which measures the amount of interaction people have with a piece of content. The engagement rate is influenced by users' comments, shares, and likes. Our Twitter engagement rate for the third quarter of 2018/19 was 0.9%, compared to 0.8% in the previous quarter. Users tend to have an average engagement rate of between 0.5-1%.

The number of views of our YouTube channel increased by around 3% per cent, Our *interchange matters* blogposts were viewed 250 times in the third quarter of 2018/19, by 149 visitors. This compares to the 418 views we had in the first quarter of 2018/19, from 181 visitors.

8. Online bus users' community

In March 2015 we set up an online bus users community to focus on the needs of bus passengers whose voices are not necessarily heard as loudly as users of other modes of transport. This was essentially a list of email addresses in a database and members received a periodic newsletter. However it proved much more difficult to attract members to the community than originally anticipated when it launched and the number of 'real people' on the list as opposed to industry and local government members was very low. We decided to move the community onto Twitter with a separate hashtag @Itwbuscommunity in 2017 and although we are only followed by a relatively small number of people we have managed to generate some good discussion and debate.

In the third quarter of the year the number of followers of our Twitter bus users community increased by 8.6% to 176.

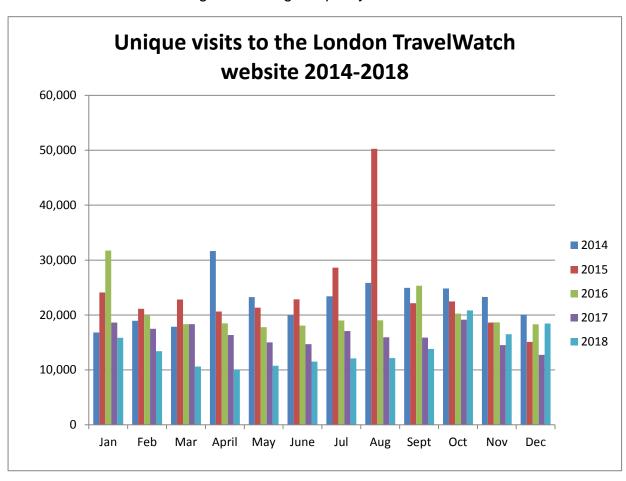
9. Website

There were 20,885 unique visits to the website in October 2018, 16,500 in November 2018 and 18,441 in December 2018.

Month	Unique visitors (2017 figures in brackets)	No of visits	Viewed pages	% spending 0-30 seconds on site
October 2018	20,855(19,446)	22,696	33,296	77.33
November 2018	16,500(14,622)	18,261	26,098	79.74
December 2018	18,441 (12,468)	20,230	27,092	80.95

The busiest day in the third quarter of 2018/19 in terms of hits was 2 October (3,717 unique visits) which is likely to be due to publicity on our consultation on Arriva Rail London's proposals to close 51 London Overground ticket offices. The next day (3 October) was the second most popular day (1,157 unique visits). The third highest number of hits was registered on 3 December (855 unique visits), the day of our bus users' event in Parliament with Rupa Huq, MP for Ealing Central and Acton.

The graph below compares the website viewing figures for the last five years. It is important to note that we changed the way we collected these figures in July 2015 when we started to use Google Analytics to monitor our website traffic. This generally gives a lower figure than our previous monitoring software due to spam filtering. The figures reflect a fall in visitor numbers in summer 2017 after we were successful in getting train operators and TfL to amend links to London TravelWatch where our details were more prominent than they should be, which led to a large number of unnecessary and time consuming phone and website contacts. TfL have also improved the complaints section of their website. This is likely to have reduced the number of visits to our website and means that the visits we are receiving are of a higher quality.



Our visitor numbers now seem to have recovered to the level they were at the start of 2018 having lost a large number due to the revamp of the consumer advice section which meant that links to, and searches for, one of our most popular pages with money saving tips were broken.

There are three spikes in the above graph and the reasons are listed below:

- April 2014 we received a large number of unique visits after we completed the first phase of our website upgrade
- August 2015 we received our record number of unique visits and this is likely to be as a result of that month's London Underground strikes
- January 2016 the large number of unique visits is likely to be as a result of our involvement in several ticket office consultations

Most popular webpages in quarter 3 2018/19

As the table below shows, the most popular webpage in quarter 3 was 'Where can I use my Pay As You Go Oyster card?'. Our frequently asked questions section is popular with website visitors and we are continually updating it to reflect common issues that we become aware of to enable consumers to help themselves.

	Page	Page	% Page
		views	views
1	/faqs/oyster/where_can_i_use_my_pay_as_you_go_oyster_card	14,184	16.4
2	/home/	7,870	9.1
3	/faqs/oyster/where_can_i_top_up_my_oyster_card_	7,086	8.19
4	/news/view?id=715&x[0]=news/list (news item on ARL proposals	6,935	8.02
	to close 51 ticket offices at London Overground stations)		
5	/faqs/contactless_payments/will_you_can_you_get_a_receipt_fo	6,555	7.58
	r_your_contactless_payment_		

Popular news items in quarter 3 2018/19

The most popular news item in the third quarter of 2018/19 was one on the proposed closure of 51 London Overground ticket offices. Items on TfL's proposed bus changes and the changes to the rail and Tube map were also popular.

- 1) Planned closure of ticket offices at 51 London Overground stations tell us your views (20 September) 6,935 views
- 2) Passenger watchdog expresses alarm at extensive bus changes planned for London (1 October 2018) 308 views
- 3) Watchdog secures big win for passengers as best kept secrets are revealed on London's rail and Tube map (5 December) 243 view
- 4) Tube Strike: 2 and 3 November (1 November 2010) 148 views

5) London TravelWatch Board meeting 23 October 2018 – (18 October) – 105 views

Most downloaded documents

The most popular documents on our website in the third quarter of 2018/19 were:

- 1) Information in support of a Statutory Consultation regarding a Major Change Proposal 210 views
- 2) LTW595 Board paper on closure of London Overground ticket offices 139 views
- 3) Arriva Rail London letter to London TravelWatch with their proposals to close 51 London Overground ticket offices 90 views
- 4) LTW592 Board paper on proposed closure of 51 London Overground ticket offices 76 views
- 5) Board meeting agenda 20/11/18 56 views

NB: This is likely to be an underestimate as it does not register downloads made when someone directly links from a search engine (it only counts downloads made when someone is already on our website).

Visitor details

In the third quarter of 2018/19, 77.13% of all traffic to the website came from search engines, with 20.55% coming direct and 2.32% via links from other sites. Google, Bing and Yahoo were the most popular search engines used.

Search terms this quarter included: 'Oyster card area', 'TfL complaints', 'cheap London travel' and 'can I use Oyster card to Hackney/Bishops Stortford/Maidenhead, Basildon/Watford Junction'.

While the majority of views of the website were from users in the UK, this quarter we also had views from the USA (1.97%), Germany (0.78%) France (0.72%) and India (0.64%). In total we had views from 133 countries.

Most popular browsers and devices

Google Chrome was the most popular browser used to access the website (45.32%). 38.88% accessed the site via Apple's Safari, while 8.17% used either Microsoft's Windows Explorer or Edge browsers. 3.17% used Firefox. 54.38% of users accessed the website on a smartphone with 37.70% using a desktop PC and 7.92% using a tablet. 59.97% of mobile users viewed the website on either an Apple iPhone or an iPad.

Appendix 1: Meetings with MPs or Assembly Members or small events attended with Ministers

Stakeholder	Type of meeting	Date
Stephen Hammond MP	Meeting to discuss rail devolution,	22/10/18
(Wimbledon)	GTR, District Line and London	
	Overground, Crossrail 2, Heathrow	
	Expansion, proposed tram extension	
Nusrat Ghani MP, Parliamentary	Introductory meeting	5/12/18
Under-Secretary of State at the		
Department for Transport		
Peter Taylor, The Mayor of	Introductory meeting, but including	7/12/18
Watford	discussion on Croxley Link and	
	representations regarding London	
	Overground ticket offices	

We also met Ian Taylor, advisor to Shadow Secretary of State for Transport, Andy McDonald, on 20 November 2018 to discuss improving passenger engagement in public transport.

Other regular meetings each year

The Chief Executive and Director of Policy and Investigation (or appropriate policy officer) also have regular meetings each year with the key stakeholders listed below. The Chair usually attends meetings with Ministers, TfL Managing Directors and the Transport Commissioner and occasionally attends other meetings.

Type of meeting	Frequency
TDM Board	Monthly
Meetings with Network Rail's London Rail Director	Monthly
Meetings with managing directors of key London train operating	Quarterly
companies; GTR/Southern, Great Western, Greater Anglia,	
Southeastern, South Western Railway, C2C and Chiltern (and	
less frequently with other operators)	
Meetings with the Transport Minister	Once or twice a year
Meetings with TfL Managing Directors	Quarterly
Meetings with the Transport Commissioner	Once or twice a year
Meetings with senior ORR staff and ORR consumer expert	Three or four times a year
panel meetings	
Meetings with senior RDG staff	Three or four times a year
Meetings with other senior Network Rail staff	Three or four times a year
Meetings with Chief Constable or Deputy Chief Constable of	Once or twice a year
BTP	
Meetings with CEO/Chair of Network Rail	Once or twice a year
Meetings with CEO RAIB	Two or three times a year

Appendix 2: Forthcoming communications priorities and messages

- 4.1 Priorities for proactive communications based on four areas which are particularly important for passengers in London
 - Fares and ticketing this is an important area given the wide coverage of anything to do with fares in the media and the impact fares and ticketing have on passengers. Over the last couple of years we have stepped up our calls for a fairer, simpler, fares and ticketing system, convening quarterly fares and ticketing round table meetings and highlighting some of the anomalies between commuter towns which are a similar distance from London. We have also supported the extension of Oyster/contactless payment acceptance, securing the extension to Gatwick in 2016. We are now focusing our attention on getting these methods of payment extended to Stansted, where 16,000 penalty fares a year are issued to passengers wrongly believing that they can use them to travel to the airport.
 - Accessibility ensuring everyone can travel around London easily is a key priority for us and we also have a legal duty to ensure we represent the needs of disabled passengers. Over the last few years we have had considerable success persuading TfL and a few London boroughs to take a stronger line against businesses obstructing the pavement. We will continue to 'name and shame' boroughs which are not taking their duties seriously, using Twitter to highlight some of the worst examples of street clutter. We have also recently done some work on the benefits of converting some 'hail and ride' route sections to fixed, accessible bus stops and will continue to promote this, including with a survey on our website.
 - Bus performance buses are the workhorses of London's transport network and play an important part in keeping the capital moving as they are the only fully accessible mode of transport and are available 24 hours a day, seven days a week. Over the last few years we have successfully highlighted falling bus speeds in the capital. As well as securing press coverage on the issue, we have used our bus users community account on Twitter to post a series of graphs showing recent trends and encourage debate. We will continue to push TfL to take action to arrest these declining speeds with bus priority schemes.
 - Interchanges our multi-modal remit reflects the way most people use transport in London – making active choices between modes and interchanging from one mode to another in the course of a typical journey. Poor interchanges have a disproportionate impact on the quality of journeys so improving the passenger experience is a key priority for us. We followed up our 2015 report Interchange Matters report with a series of biannual Interchange Matters events sharing best practice, and a blog assessing

various interchanges across the capital. We continue to call for interchange improvements for passengers.

Access to airports has become an increasingly important part of our work since we published our 2014 report on *Improving public transport to London's airports*. We have had a number of successes and have continued to make the case for improvements like the extension of Oyster and contactless. We will continue this work with a website survey and our next *interchange matters* seminar will have an access to airports theme. We also have a broad aim of issuing a press release every other month on this topic.

4.2 Areas where we are ready when the opportunity comes – important areas for our work but which we are not pushing independently

- Rail devolution we have long supported devolving services to Transport for London and have made the case for TfL's concession model both publicly and with politicians. We continue to do so, highlighting the benefits to passengers which include frequent services, improved customer service, decent standards for stations, enhanced ticketing facilities, additional staffing, improved information and turn up and go for passengers needing assistance.
- Stranded trains We know from our safety work that when trains are stranded and then evacuated either by the operator or passengers it can be either inconvenient or even dangerous for passengers. Given the congested and crowded rail network in London these incidents are bound to happen. We feed into reviews when passengers are stranded on trains as they were outside Lewisham last March. We then aim to call operators in to explain what happened, in a timely fashion as we did last year when Southeastern gave a briefing on that particular incident at our Policy Committee. We also respond to reports in the media.
- Roads pricing we will continue to highlight the need for some sort of roads pricing system to be implemented in London. Once the Board has agreed a policy line we will take opportunities to support work on the topic by other organisations as well as lobbying mayoral candidates.

4.3 Areas where our Board meetings can set the agenda

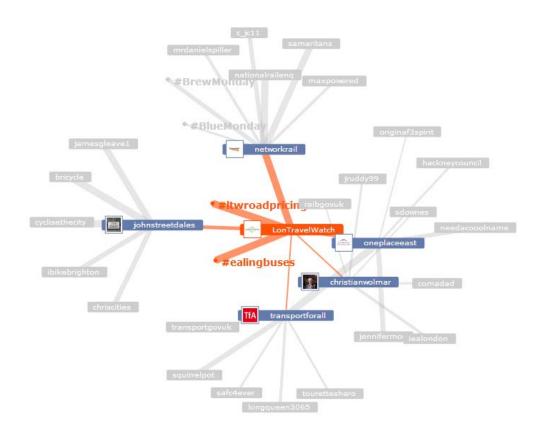
Service performance – we monitor TfL and National Rail operator
performance in our TfL and National Rail monitoring reports, identifying trends
early and using our quarterly meetings with operators to raise issues and
highlight areas where performance could be improved. When we identify
particular issues they will be discussed by the Board. Previously we identified
poor GTR performance at an early stage in their franchise. We are currently

looking very closely at the performance of South Western Railway, which seems to have declined since the start of the current franchise.

• Disruption (planned and unplanned) – Because of the crowded and congested London rail network there are a lot of closures for engineering works. We have been supporting the Travel Demand Management Board since 2013 and we have been keeping an eye on potential disruption for passengers where we do not think the industry has looked at issues in enough detail. Most recently the Board considered works at Euston for HS2, which will cause disruption for passengers, talking to representatives of train operators and Network Rail to ensure that their plans take into account the needs of passengers. When things do go wrong, like the problems caused by the failure to properly implement the May 2018 timetable, we take the opportunity to review the issues and highlight the lessons that can be learned.

Appendix 3: Twitter mention map

The linkages at the bottom of the mention map show the diverse connections you can make on Twitter and the potential to reach a wider audience through prolific tweeters with a broad range of followers.



Richard Freeston-Clough, February 2019