

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 second 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:

- warning about the possible affect of the Crossrail delays on bus users
- making the case for steady, sustained investment in London's transport infrastructure
- highlighting the potential negative impact of TfL's proposed bus changes
- highlighting the unfairness of the ticketing system which will get worse with the January 2019 fares increases.

2. Our communications work

2.1 TfL's proposed bus route changes

What was the issue?

Transport for London was preparing to consult on a number of major bus route changes, the details of which were leaked to a local blogger ahead of the official consultation.

What did we do?

We were approached by the Guardian who asked for our thoughts on the proposed changes. Having voiced concerns privately in meetings with TfL senior staff we were well placed to issue an informed press statement when the proposed plans were leaked. While we were careful to make it clear that the consultation had not started yet, we gave them some general thoughts and talked them through the concerns we were likely to have if the leaked proposals were similar to the ones TfL would be consulting on.

What was the outcome?

We featured in an article in the Guardian (which has a print circulation of 170,000 and a daily average of 10.3m unique website views) which cited our 2015 Living on the Edge research on transport affordability in the context of TfL's proposed bus changes. The article highlighted our concerns about the potential impact on low-paid workers, the elderly and people with reduced mobility of having to change buses. This was picked up in a tweet by Lewisham Deptford MP, Vicky Foxcroft which was retweeted 49 times and liked 52 times.

We will be feeding into TfL's consultation on behalf of passengers and will continue to make the case for bus users in our regular meetings with TfL to ensure that any changes they make take passengers' needs into account.

2.2 Making the case for steady, sustained investment in London's infrastructure

What was the issue?

With pressures on TfL's finances and the debate about whether funding for infrastructure in the north of England should be prioritised over funding for London, there is a risk that transport users in and around London may suffer from increased overcrowding due to lack of investment.

What did we do?

We wrote to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, making the case for steady, sustained investment in London's transport infrastructure and highlighting the risks of a reversion to 'stop start' funding and false economies which have previously hindered transport infrastructure projects.

What was the outcome?

We received a reply to our letter from the Financial Secretary to the Treasury, the Minister responsible for infrastructure delivery in which he recognised the role of London's infrastructure in supporting its growth. It goes on to say that the Government is working with TfL to develop fair and affordable plans for Crossrail 2 which includes a review to examine ways in which the scheme might be paid for.

We will continue to make the case for steady, sustained investment in London's infrastructure in the media and at meetings with the DfT and politicians.

2.3 The Crossrail delay and the impact on bus services

What was the issue?

There is a risk that passengers will lose out if TfL go ahead with planned bus changes before the core section of Crossrail is opened to the public.

What did we do?

We voiced our concerns that passengers would be disadvantaged if bus changes originally proposed to coincide with the opening of Crossrail were made before the delayed service opens next autumn. We suggested some urgent questions for Assembly Members to ask at the Plenary meeting of the London Assembly on 6 September which focused on the implications for bus users and crowding issues on the Underground.

What was the outcome?

Assembly members drew on our suggestions during the plenary session and also in the Transport Committee meeting a week later. TfL assured passengers that all service changes that directly depended on Crossrail opening on time would be delayed.

We also featured in an article in the Daily Mirror (which has a print circulation of 560,000 and 4,500 monthly website visitors) and in an item on the MayorWatch website. Both picked up on our warning that delays to Crossrail needed to take account of the needs of bus passengers.

We will continue to make the case for bus users in our regular meetings with TfL to ensure that any changes they make take passengers' needs into account.

2.4 January 2019 fares increases

What was the issue?

On 15 August, the Government announced that rail fares will rise by 3.2% in line with inflation in January 2019, the second highest increase in the last five years.

What did we do?

We pointed out that the gap between the cheapest and most expensive fares will widen still further following the increase and again highlighted the serious anomalies in the cost of travel from various different points around London's commuter belt, with some commuters paying up to £35 a week more than others for the same length of journey.

What was the outcome?

We received a wide range of coverage including 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). We also received coverage in 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) and in the local press.

We will continue to engage with the RDG and others following the publication of the findings of the first stage of their fares and ticketing consultation as we push for simpler, fairer fares for passengers.

3. Other media coverage

We had an article published in Rail Technology Magazine (which has a monthly circulation of almost 9,000 and 90,000 website visitors a month) on our crucial involvement in helping to shape the Thameslink programme since its early days.

We were mentioned in a story on the design of train carriages which provide adequate space for people with mobility difficulties in the Sun (total print circulation of over 1.5m and 30.2m monthly website visits). The Daily Express (which has a print circulation of over 350,000 and around 4.5m website visitors a month) mentioned us in an article about problems for passengers travelling during this summer's heatwave.

We also featured in the Financial Times (print circulation of 185,000 and 700,000 digital subscribers) in an article about transport apps.

There was a wide range of coverage about our consultation on the proposals to close 51 London Overground ticket offices, mainly in the local press but also in City Am which has daily print circulation of over 90,000 and 1.2m unique daily visitors to its website.

Transport Professional (the magazine of the Chartered Institution of Highways & Transportation, which has 16,000 members and 12,500 weekly newsletter subscribers) quoted us in a story on improving public transport access to Heathrow Airport.

We did four interviews this quarter on LBC (which has around 900,000 listeners a week). These covered:

- overcrowding on the transport network in the heat
- delays to Crossrail
- proposed changes to the London bus network
- simplifying rail ticketing.

4. Meetings with key stakeholders

Each year we have a number of high level meetings with our network of contacts in which we try to use our influence to secure improvements for passengers. 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 second quarter of 2018/19, we met the Shadow Secretary of State for Transport, Andy McDonald MP and the new Deputy Mayor for Transport, Heidi Alexander.

The CEO also met Rupa Huq (MP for Ealing Central and Acton) at an event and, in response to a discussion on bus passengers, she suggested she might host a panel discussion of some kind at Westminster. This is being followed up and it is hoped that an event will be held at the beginning of December. Ealing is particularly interesting because of the potential impact of Crossrail on bus services in the area.

The CEO attended several fringe events at the Labour and Conservative Party conferences.

Full details are included in the appendix to this report. We have also had a number of meetings with transport operators.

5. London TravelWatch events

We also held a bus users' 'surgery' at Uxbridge bus station in July to gather the views of local bus users. In October, we held a similar event in Walthamstow. The next communications impact report will include a summary of some of the feedback we received from the two events.

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

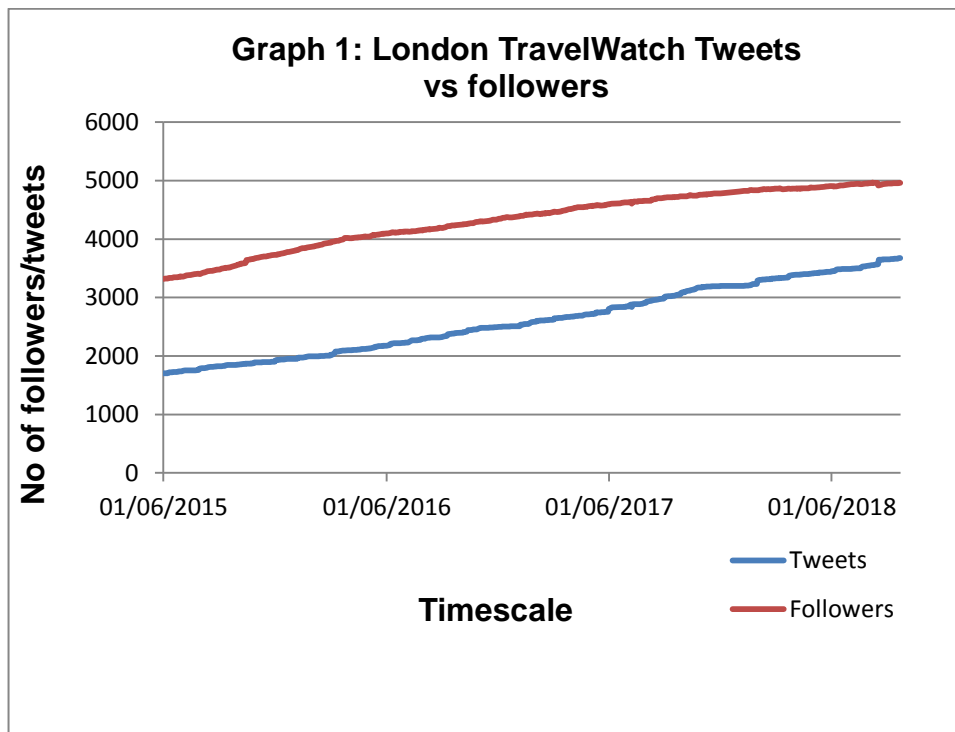
On 5 November we will be hosting the third annual Ruth Thompson Memorial Lecture. Transport economist, Paul Buchanan will be giving a lecture on roads pricing.

6. Social media

In the second quarter of 2018/19, our Twitter followers increased by 0.2 per cent, from 4,937 to 4948, compared with a 1.5 per cent increase the previous quarter. The reason for this modest increase is that we lost 43 followers on 15/16 August when Twitter removed thousands of spam followers as part of a worldwide clampdown. Progress is shown in the graph over the page. For every Twitter

account we follow we are followed by an average of 2.45 users (2.62 last quarter). In the first week of October we reached the significant milestone of 5,000 Twitter followers.

We received a total of 104 retweets and 117 likes in the second quarter of 2018/19, on a variety of topics including our Board and Policy meetings, the London Overground ticket office consultation, the fallout from the May 2018 timetable changes and pavement obstructions. We continued to 'live tweet' from our public meetings.



Following the withdrawal of the Klout service which we used to measure our level of influence on social media we will now be using Kred to do this. Kred uses a scale of 0-1,000 with scores above 700 being considered good. Our current score is 755. Transport Focus currently have a score of 790, London Councils are on 799 and Campaign for Better Transport are on 789.

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

crossrail holiday **arriva** feedback making central passenger trains says report ticket response delay
changes angel systems **offices** **proposing** policy disruption shows **stations** **passengers** close
 railway latest bank service travelling londons want **operator** **watchdog** issues action weekend able meeting
 strategy ride routes **services** discussing station performance local buses casework signalling road transport
 accessibility high **bus** fares help work number **rail** idea **london**

The 'mention map' included in appendix 2 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 113,446 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 89,089 impressions in the previous quarter. The most popular tweets included one on our meeting with Rail Minister, Jo Johnson; one calling for pedicabs to be regulated and one promoting our consultation on the proposed London Underground ticket office closures.

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 second quarter of 2018/19 was 0.8%, compared to 0.7% 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 5% per cent, less than the previous quarter's 15% as we had produced a lot of new content during the previous quarter but we have been more low profile in quarter two. Our interchange matters blogposts were viewed 418 times in the second quarter of 2018/19, by 181 visitors. This compares to the 232 views we had in the first quarter of 2018/19, from 133 visitors.

7. Online bus users' community

In the second quarter of the year the number of followers of our Twitter bus users community increased by 13% to 162. At the start of July we did an '#AskLTW' Twitter session for bus users and our activity was also picked up by the generic 'Catch the Bus Week' Twitter feed.

8. Website

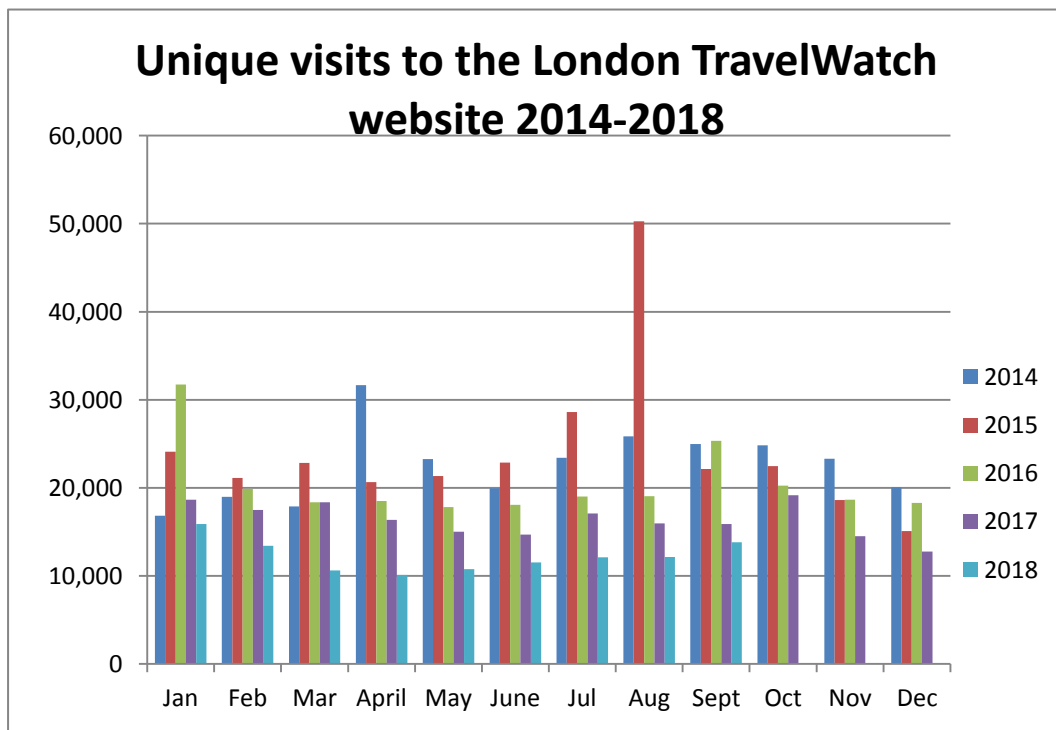
There were 12,114 unique visits to the website in July 2018, 12,150 in August 2018 and 13,819 in September 2018.

Month	Unique visitors (2017 figures in brackets)	No of visits	Viewed pages	% spending 0-30 seconds on site
July 2018	12,114 (17,241)	13,408	19,815	80.91%
August 2018	12,150 (15,972)	13,307	19,406	79.39%
September 2018	13,819 (15,965)	15,336	22,525	79.01%

The busiest day in the second quarter of 2018/19 in terms of hits was 21 September (809 unique visits). This is likely to be as it was the day after the announcement of the proposals to close 51 London Overground ticket offices. The next most popular day was the day of the announcement itself, 20 September (735 unique visits). The third highest number of hits was registered on 25 September (631 unique visits) and was probably due to further publicity about the ticket office consultation, particularly by trade unions.

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 are 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.

The last communications report mentioned that we lost a number of visitors as a result of 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 have been broken. Our visitor numbers are showing some signs of recovering to the level they were at the start of 2018 but the work we have done to rectify this is taking time to filter through.



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 2 2018/19

As the table below shows, the most popular webpage in quarter 2 was 'Where can I use my Pay As You Go Oyster card?'.

	Page	Page views	% Page views
1	/faqs/oyster/where_can_i_use_my_pay_as_you_go_oyster_card	8,963	14.52
2	/home/	7,866	12.74
3	/faqs/oyster/where_can_i_top_up_my_oyster_card_	5,245	8.49
4	/faqs/contactless_payments/will_you_can_you_get_a_receipt_for_your_contactless_payment_	3,968	6.43
5	/faqs/general/freedom_pass	3,054	4.95

Popular news items in quarter 2 2018/19

The most popular news item in the second quarter of 2018/19 was one on the proposed closure of 51 London Overground ticket offices. An item on the proposal to close Angel Road railway station and our response to the delay to the opening of the Crossrail central section were also popular.

- 1) Planned closure of ticket offices at 51 London Overground stations - tell us your views (20 September) – 1,716 views
- 2) Proposal to close Angel Road railway station (23 August 2018) – 173 views
- 3) Response to Crossrail delays (31 August) – 104 views
- 4) Fares farce adds up to £35 a week for millions of commuters (4 June 2018) – 88 views
- 5) Response to independent report on disruption at Lewisham during the severe winter weather earlier this year (23 August 2018) – 48 views

Most downloaded documents

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

1. Arriva Rail London's Statutory Consultation Submission – 121
2. Arriva Rail London's ticket office consultation letter to London TravelWatch – 105

3. Angel Road closure notice – 47
4. Policy Officer job advert – 46
5. Policy Officer job description – 40

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 first quarter of 2018/19, 78.82% of all traffic to the website came from search engines, with 18% coming direct and 3.44% via links from other sites. Google, Bing and Yahoo were the most popular search engines used.

Search terms this quarter included: 'can under 16 get bus fines?', 'can you use Oyster to travel to Bishops Stortford?', 'interchange matters', 'London freedom pass zone limits', 'London TravelWatch board meeting' and 'Oyster card can be used by many people?'.

While the majority of views of the website were from users in the UK, this quarter we also had views from the USA (2.54%), France (1.05%) and India (1.01%). In total we had views from 126 countries.

Most popular browsers and devices

Google Chrome was the most popular browser used to access the website (45.5%). 37.1% accessed the site via Apple's Safari, while 8.72% used either Microsoft's Windows Explorer or Edge browsers. 3.68% used Firefox. 52.54% of users accessed the website on a smartphone with 38.74% using a desktop PC and 8.72% using a tablet. 58.87% 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
Andy McDonald MP, Shadow Minister for Transport	Introductory meeting	18/7/18
Heidi Alexander, Deputy Mayor for Transport, Greater London Authority	Introductory meeting	1/8/18
Speakers including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lord Prescott, former Secretary of State for Transport • Daniel Zeichner MP (former Shadow Transport Minister) 	Various Labour Party Conference fringe events. The CEO was a guest speaker at The Labour Transport Group's meeting: 'Towards A Devolved Transport Policy - What Should Labour Do Before 2022?'	24-25/09/18
Speakers including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chris Grayling MP, Secretary of State for Transport • Ben Houchen, Mayor of The Tees Valley • Nusrat Ghani MP, Transport Minister 	Various Conservative Party Conference fringe events	1-2/10/18

Other regular meetings each year

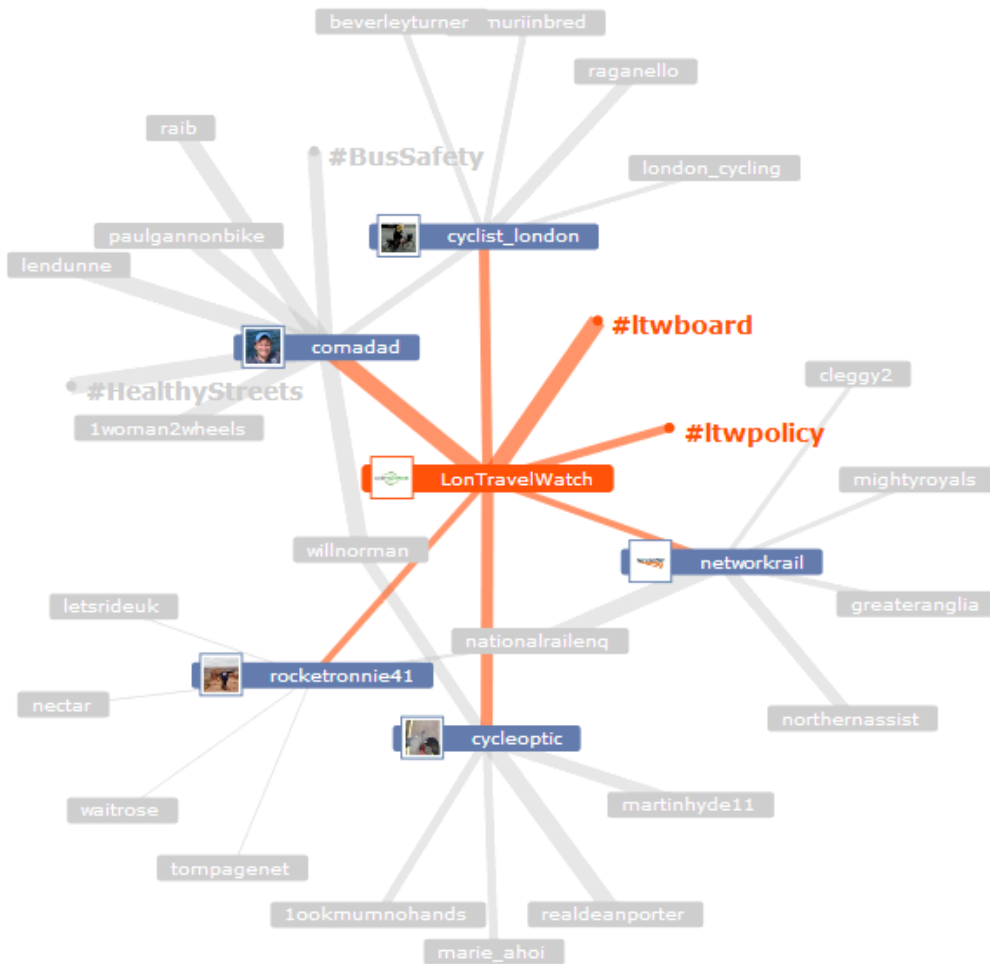
The Chief Executive and Director of Policy and Investigation (or appropriate policy officer) also have regular meetings each year with the stakeholders listed below. The Chair usually attends meetings with Ministers, TfL Managing Directors and the Transport Commissioner and occasionally attends other 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 companies; GTR/Southern, Great Western, Greater Anglia, Southeastern, South Western Railway, C2C and Chiltern (and less frequently with other operators)	Quarterly
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 panel meetings	Three or four times a year
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 BTP	Once or twice a year
Meetings with CEO/Chair of Network Rail	Once or twice a year
Meetings with CEO RAIB	Two or three times a year

Appendix 2 – London TravelWatch 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, October 2018