



‘DON’T LET THEM TAKE YOU FOR A RIDE’

Exposing the Mayor’s inconsistencies
and under-publicised plans

The terms ‘road pricing’ and ‘road user charging’ are mostly used interchangeably by people, although Transport for London (TfL) use the latter to cover ‘taxes on moving’ like the ULEZ or Congestion Charging. Or, in future, tunnel tolls.

Some see road pricing as reflecting distance (such as the concept of pay-per-mile tolls). Drivers have to pay several other taxes/charges for using the road, such as VED (‘road tax’) and parking permits. In broad terms, UK drivers pay about £50bn a year in the various taxes/charges, including VAT. Only a fraction (c. £10bn a year is spent back on roads, much of it wasted on schemes to make life harder for drivers.

ROAD PRICING – THE PEOPLE AGAINST IT, POLITICIANS OFTEN FOR IT...

- Mayor Khan got elected on a slogan ‘A Mayor for All Londoners’. But his key policy document, the [Mayor’s Transport Strategy](#), is blatantly anti-motorist. Transport for London (TfL) is bound by the Strategy to (high handedly) ensure that by 2041, 80% of journeys made in Greater London are either by walking, cycling or public transport. Motor vehicle journeys are to be pushed off the road.....
- TfL has [made clear](#) its desire to implement a road user charging scheme that would replace the current Congestion Charge and ULEZ. The Mayor is also Chair of TfL.
- The under-publicised consultation on ULEZ (2022) had questions on what sort of road user charging might be introduced – and effectively assumed that it would be in place London-wide by 2026 to replace ULEZ income. **83%** of responses were **opposed**. (See report, Appendix F, [p112](#)).

- Even so, in 2023, the Greater London Assembly Transport Committee announced a further consultation on what it might look like. Public responses were heavily [against](#), with marked concerns on privacy as well as cost.
- Saying ‘no decision has been made’ looks thin. The Mayor’s Transport Strategy reads: “The Mayor, through TfL, will investigate proposals for the next generation of road user charging systems.....TfL will develop the design, operation and technical elements of these proposals.” (awkwardly numbered, [p96 or p49/163](#) in PDF).
- Having [made clear](#) its desire for a road user charging scheme that would replace the current Congestion Charge and ULEZ, TfL has recruited several contractors working on developing road pricing systems. The project, Project Detroit, will cost over £100 million, and it’s not just to look at processing payments in-house.

LONDON-WIDE ROAD PRICING? ... DENIALS AND LIMP EXCUSES ...

- The Mayor’s [denials](#) of intent are unconvincing – see his [non-answer](#) to Neil Garratt AM at Mayor’s Question Time (MQT/2023/4718, 21 Dec 2023). It goes against the grain of his long term pattern of behaviour (Election approaching?). But if he can so easily change his mind, might he easily change it back again?
- He was reported (18 Jan 2022) as wanting [pay-per-mile road pricing](#) in the context of ‘climate change targets’. “Longer term, **Mr Khan says he needs to bring in a pay-per-mile system...**”
- On 8 April 2024, the Express published no less than [seventeen pieces of evidence](#) on the Mayor’s plans for road pricing.
- Despite his denials, he has recently talked up ‘having a single charge to pay... making it simple’. Making it easier for drivers, even? How this could be achieved without a replacement road pricing system was not explained. (See short ‘Future of Motoring’ video, linked from [article](#), March 2024).
- An under-publicised document reveals the [assumption](#) that ULEZ income will be replaced by road pricing income by **2026**... as part of his plans ‘to save the planet’.
- He claimed that about ULEZ, even though his own document [gives the game away](#) that it will have no effect! It is quite clearly about making money! Expanding ULEZ was identified as a ‘new source of revenue’ worth over £100m a year in 2021 ([p63](#)).

WHAT IS TRANSPORT FOR LONDON UP TO BEHIND THE SCENES?

- In 2021, TfL explicitly reviewed a ‘**pay per kilometre**’ road pricing scheme as a ‘new source of revenue’ ([p56](#)) – and liked it. Revenue potential was about £900m/year net - twice the then-current take on ULEZ/LEZ/Con Charge.
- TfL is already employing [contractors](#) to develop ‘**road user charging systems**’, but we are told that ‘the technology isn’t ready yet’.... it was tipped as being ready for the ‘**pay per kilometre**’ scheme in 2025 ([p56](#)). Any reasonable person would see flannelling from a Mayor trading softly as he’s desperate to get re-elected?

- TfL has already spent at least £2.9m on developing '[distance-based road pricing](#)' (pay per mile or km?). Yet we are being told that 'no decisions have been made'.
- As there are '[no formal conclusions](#)' from the work done so far, nothing to share in Freedom of Information responses to concerned members of the public! Perhaps unsurprisingly, TfL makes use of a Steering Group to oversee direction of all TfL road user charging schemes, but they **do not record minutes of their discussions!** ([p24/30](#))
- However, clues were given in the 2022 consultation, during which ULEZ got almost all the coverage and the Mayor's road pricing ambitions were conveniently **much under-publicised**. We can see why – the following self-satisfied hype from [TfL](#) is just insulting to our intelligence!

*"...further action will be needed in the long-term to achieve the **necessary** levels of traffic and emissions reductions to continue to improve Londoners' health and to meet net zero carbon targets to tackle the climate emergency. This may require the introduction of London-wide road user charging by **2030 at the latest**, as set out by an Element Energy analysis of a 2030 net zero target for London. The analysis notes that all scenarios would benefit from London-wide road user charging being introduced **as early as possible**..."*

TAKING YOU, YOUR MONEY AND PRIVACY FOR GRANTED... TAXING OVER 1 IN 4 JOURNEYS OFF THE ROAD?

- Even less publicised was the [assumption](#) that 'road user charging' would be in place by **2026**... in a long and very technical consultation document known as 'the Jacobs Report'. The Jacobs Report also [gives the game away](#) that the proposed scheme will "have a negligible beneficial impact on carbon emissions in Greater London."
- The 'necessary reductions' are **27% of our motor vehicle journeys** and are based on a strange report from the Element Energy consultancy [2022]. For some reason, the Mayor insists on aiming for the 'Net Zero' fantasy world target by 2030, 20 years ahead of national government.

The bizarre Orwellian [webpage](#) "**Pathways to Net Zero Carbon by 2030**" bleats: "*Fairness must be at the heart of the net zero pathway... We must ensure we are supporting those on low incomes from the costs.*"

Yet the ULEZ expansion – a stepping stone to London-wide road pricing by getting the surveillance cameras in – will seriously **harm** many poorer and lower-paid people.

- There is a possible sting in the tail, a change of tone in response to this? Apart from vehicle-related factors like emissions and distance travelled, TfL [hinted](#) that in their brave new world, charges could be based on '**household income**', 'where you drive' and 'available alternatives such as walking and cycling'.

Yet they have the nerve to pretend that this would "respect **privacy**' with 'the minimum possible collection and use of personal data'. It would be quite the opposite – who decides if your journey to work or the shops is optimum or even 'necessary', or whether you should be having a delivery by Ocado or Amazon?

- Apart from being irrational and irrelevant to road use – targeting **income** could compromise privacy within a family. We are talking about a '**Big Brother**' mentality, a bureaucracy getting too big for its jackboots! It makes you wonder **how steep the charges will be** if journeys are to be taxed off the road to meet the **27%** target?
- TfL has installed thousands of cameras across London to bring in more taxes and fines on drivers. There are [issues](#) for **population surveillance**.

OTHER SUBTLE PUSHES FOR ROAD PRICING – AT LOCAL LEVEL

- The Mayor will work with London boroughs on setting up their own local road pricing schemes ([p96 or p49/163](#)). Since-embarrassed and now **ex-Hackney Mayor** Philip Glanville [proposed the borough as a pilot for a local](#) scheme. The [City of London](#) is another local authority potentially involved, keen to work with TfL and/or explore a charging mechanism for the Square Mile.
- By chance, residents in LB Hammersmith & Fulham discovered possible pricing schemes for journeys in local areas and on local roads. These would be policed by '[geo-fencing](#)', which the council is encouraged to accelerate. The draft *air quality document* was notably written for them by Poppy Lyle, a [senior manager](#) in the Mayor's GLA environment division.

ADDING INSULT TO INJURY ... KHAN'S HYPOCRISY

Khan is a hypocrite - [in his 2021 Manifesto \(p33\)](#), he crowed:

"The Tories tried to force an extension to the Congestion Charge to the North and South Circulars....But I stood firm and stopped [it] from happening."

He has also – repeatedly - let off [lavish fireworks displays](#) when it suited him and been enthusiastic about [cannabis farms](#) in California, which would hardly be great for air quality if replicated over here. The smoke is highly [carcinogenic](#) and even growing the plants produces emissions ([BVOCs](#)). Finally, he has tried to push more people to use the tube, even though the [air quality](#) has been recorded as better at street level.



- Is it 'London's toxic air' or 'London's toxic Mayor', please, Mr Khan? In the shorter term, he wants to justify increased taxes on poorer drivers on '[climate change](#)' and 'air quality' grounds. It's funny that if Greater London's air is so filthy (as he claims), why is he always urging people to walk and cycle in it?
- The suggestion that around 4,000 Londoners die a year as a result of air pollution is a bit of a try-on. Visit [here](#) for a rebuttal on the deaths, which the GLA has admitted are a 'statistical construct... not real people'.
- Mayor Khan has previously eyed the £500m of car tax (VED) Londoners pay to the Government every year, "**If the Government refuses, I will ask TfL to consider other ways of raising income**". He has recently levied a charge of £20 on council tax bills for TfL, which has been pushing for unpopular schemes like LTNs (Low Traffic Neighbourhoods) that force traffic onto main roads. They make drivers travel further, burning more fuel and increasing emissions.
- "A million tickets a year are set to be issued to speeding motorists in London following a massive expansion of 20mph limits and the roll-out of new **LASERcam 4** speed cameras" ([Evening Standard, 25.2.22](#))

SORRY, MR MAYOR YOU HAVE BEEN RUMBLED. WE ARE NOT IMPRESSED

The Fair Deal for the Motorist campaign was launched in 2009 as a private initiative. It has exposed plans from the EU and levels of UK government that together add up to a War on The Motorist. It is solidly non-party i.e. lets you support your own candidates.

Please help spread the word and - better still - support us in calling for a fairer deal for drivers who already pay billions a year in taxes.

[Campaign articles index](#)

Offers of help to 07976-414913 or
PO Box 13199, London SW6 6ZU
You can also write to *info* 'AT'
fairdealforthemotorist.org.uk

 
[@abetterdealdn](https://twitter.com/abetterdealdn)

Published and promoted by the Fair Deal for the Motorist
Campaign (New Alliance), both of PO Box 13199, London SW6 6ZU

Data protection note: Safeguarding privacy, GDPR and your right to object