

# Impact



50 YEARS

Autumn 2023



Your

**Campaign for Better Transport**

Newsletter

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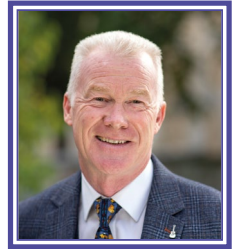
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# Welcome to the return of your newsletter



## A message from our Chief Executive

Since I joined Campaign for Better Transport in 2020, we've grown a lot and we've changed a lot. I came to the organisation at a time of turbulence, and I'm very excited to be leading us into a time of more activity and more influence.

I'm serious and ambitious about making transport better. We've built great energy across our work recently, and I hope you'll enjoy reading about this in the newsletter. You'll see how we've increased our presence in Westminster to advocate for better transport, and how we're improving our engagement with local authorities to make transport better across the country.

We've recently published research that justifies shifting many domestic journeys from plane to train, and we've also published a campaign briefing on better transport for better health, as well as a toolkit to help businesses move to better transport. And this year we held our inaugural Better Transport Week, celebrating sustainable transport.

None of our achievements would be possible without you. It's time for our campaign to grow, I hope you'll be alongside me to continue to increase Campaign for Better Transport's reach and impact.

*Paul Tuohy, Chief Executive,  
Campaign for Better Transport*

**CELEBRATING 50 YEARS OF CAMPAIGNING**





# Better transport means a lot

We would like to take this opportunity to thank all our supporters. Without you, Campaign for Better Transport would not exist. We recently asked people to share their reasons for believing in better transport. Each person's reason was unique, and we're pleased to share some of them here.

“

*I am aged 80, unable to drive and live in a remote village near the Suffolk coast. 14 years ago, when my husband and I moved here, there was a regular bus service, or we would not have come here. Since, our bus service has been cut. Now I am dependent on my elderly husband to get anywhere. We will have to move to be nearer the health centre, hospital and shops. Yet we love where we are and have friends. We dislike adding to climate change by car driving but have no choice. Everyone in the village is desperate for a return of bus travel, and people are well aware of the effect of fossil fuels.*

”

*Daphne*

“

*It will help our only home, mother earth. It will reduce traffic and make our towns and cities better places to live in.*

”

*Stephen*

“

*Better transport infrastructure improves quality of lives. Better transport infrastructure improves national productivity. Better transport infrastructure improves air quality and reduces pollution... Better public transport improves inclusivity in society. It's a no brainer!*

”

*John*

“

*It is environmentally beneficial both locally and globally. It is socially fairer across society. It needs to be both reliable and dependable. It also needs to be integrated, especially across trains, buses and boats. Affordability is important too, with tickets transferable between trains and buses in particular.*

”

*David and Liz*

*I am pleased to share this letter with you. This shows the value of our hard work, and provides motivation to keep campaigning for integrated transport that serves its communities.*

*– Paul Tuohy*

1st September 2023

Dear Paul,

I wanted to congratulate you, and the Campaign for Better Transport, for reaching the impressive milestone of your 50th anniversary.

The Campaign for Better Transport has been pioneering in your support and advocacy for improving public transport in London and across the UK. For the past 50 years you have been tirelessly campaigning for more equitable public transport for everyone. Your Better Transport Week highlighted the social, economic and environmental importance of public transport. I'm delighted that TfL was able to support the campaign and facilitated a visit to Great Portland Street station, which as you know celebrates its 160th anniversary this year.

On behalf of all Londoners I also want to thank you for your recent work with TfL as they continue to deliver the Bus Action Plan and work to increase and improve the capital's bus network. Your support on zero-emission buses has been particularly welcome.

Yours sincerely,

**Sadiq Khan**  
Mayor of London

# Advocating for better transport in Westminster



By Ben Curtis

**With new team members joining us over the past year, we have been able to substantially grow our contact with MPs, Peers, Ministers and Civil Servants. This means we can now advocate much more effectively for positive changes in transport policy and funding.**

We have built much closer relations with the Department for Transport, regularly engaging both political appointees and civil servants. In the words of Transport Secretary Mark Harper, Campaign for Better Transport has become 'indispensable' to the Department, meeting frequently with him and fellow Ministers as well as their advisers to put forward our proposals.

Through ongoing contact at multiple levels, we've succeeded in getting our policy ideas directly onto the Government's agenda. Recent wins directly influenced by us include the £2 bus fare cap (and its extension) and expanding pay-as-you-go rail ticketing across South-East England.

In addition, we have established regular contact with HM Treasury, meeting politicians and officials alike. Ensuring our voice is heard at the Treasury is absolutely critical, as any infrastructure improvements and service enhancements depend on Treasury spending priorities. We've made a strong case for continued investment in sustainable transport, including through our influential 'pay-as-you-drive' report on funding the transition to electric vehicles and the necessary shift towards public transport.

In early July, we brought many key figures together at our annual parliamentary reception. Attended by over 180 people, including the Transport Secretary and the Chair of the Transport Select Committee, over 30 members of parliament and industry leaders from across the transport sector, it provided a platform to strengthen existing relationships and forge valuable new ones.

Looking ahead to the next General Election, we have also maintained close relationships with other political parties. This engagement aims to ensure our priorities around rail reform, fares and ticketing, decarbonisation and shifting away from carbon-intensive transport to more sustainable modes are reflected in the manifestos that will be eventually presented to voters.

This greatly expanded Westminster and Whitehall outreach has put us in a strong position to shape the future of transport policy and win further improvements for passengers and communities nationwide. At the time of writing, the Prime Minister

has begun to distance himself from previously agreed net zero targets, so we will be at the forefront of holding the Government's feet to the fire on honouring its environmental commitments.

With your support, we will continue engaging the nation's decision makers to create a transport system that is sustainable, inclusive and attractive to passengers. We could not do this important work without our generous donors and passionate advocates.

**Thank you as always for being part of the campaign.**



Opposite: Mark Harper MP speaking at our parliamentary reception in July. Photo by Devin Ainslie.



**In June we held our first ever Better Transport Week. Our aim was to promote and celebrate public transport, shared transport and active travel. We were delighted to have over 100 partners enthusiastically join us. Over seven days we brought the transport industry, government, business and charities together, along with passengers, pedestrians, cyclists, and people who care about transport. My thanks to all those who supported us.**

Over the course of the week, we travelled far and wide, witnessing transport developments under construction, infrastructure in action and a range of innovative projects planned for the future, while people were able to take advantage of promotions and discounts, enter competitions and engage with every aspect of our work and the fantastic work being done in the sector, whilst calling for improvements.

The week was meant to be a one-off for us to celebrate our 50th anniversary but it proved so successful that we intend to repeat this next year and every year thereafter. In the meantime, I am pleased to tell you about this year's Better Transport Week.

Report back  
by Norman Baker



Admiring Transport for Wales new rolling stock, Silviya with Wales's Deputy Minister for Climate Change, Lee Waters MS. Photo by Transport for Wales.

## Monday – Rail Day

Rail day opened with a launch at King's Cross station with the Rail Minister, Huw Merriman MP and senior figures from the rail industry.

Silviya and Mark, from our research team, visited Cardiff for a tour of their new tri-mode rolling stock, and for discussions with Lee Waters MS – the minister responsible for Transport in Wales.



Rail Day launch at Kings Cross Station with Huw Merriman MP. Photo by David Mirzoeff

## Love Your Station

Our 'Love Your Station' competition launched on Rail Day, in partnership with Community Rail Network and we were delighted by the many entries. The judges chose Philip's poem celebrating Ely station as the winner.

*The staff at Ely are the best  
At helping us when there's a test.  
They're calm and collected every day  
So we get to our destination with no delay.*

*The station is always tidy and clean  
And welcoming wherever we've been.  
The coffee's great, and so's the tea  
There's even a shop on platform three.*

*We are spoilt with so many selections  
As there are lines in five directions,  
Four train companies, we are so cool,  
For London, Birmingham or Liverpool.*

*Visitors, we welcome you  
To markets, riverside and cathedral too.  
Of course there's racks to store your bike  
So, Ely Station, what's not to like?*

– Philip, Ely station

## Tuesday – Bus and Coach Day

Celebrating the nation's most popular form of public transport — the bus — we went to Brighton to meet with representatives from Brighton and Hove Buses and visited solar-powered bus company, The Big Lemon, toured their electric vehicle depot and spoke with passengers and drivers.

## Wednesday – Local Transport Day

With four teams of Campaign for Better Transport staff at events around the country this was an exciting day. We hosted a roundtable in Manchester, where integrated transport is entering an exciting new chapter with the Bee Network, capped multimodal fares and plans for a franchised bus network.

We also explored the history of the tube with Transport for London. And we hosted a light rail summit 'Light Years Ahead' in Dudley to learn about the importance of trams across the country, including Coventry's Very Light Rail scheme, and visited Birmingham to see their exciting plans for transforming transport in Britain's second city.

Podcast host and bus champion Emily Turner visited Ash Grove bus depot in East London to meet drivers and try out the comfortable cabs, while we encouraged the public to thank drivers for the important work they all do for us.

### Coventry Very Light Rail

Coventry Very Light Rail is a research and development project that aims to bring the benefits of a conventional tram but for a lower installation cost, by requiring less work to the roads, and powering the vehicles by battery rather than overhead electricity cables. We were very excited to get to see the project in action and visit the new Very Light Rail Innovation Centre, where we saw test track and a light rail simulator. The project is progressing well and Coventry City Council plan to install a demonstrator track in Coventry city centre next year.

## Thursday – Health Day

Coinciding with Clean Air Day, we launched our new health paper, *Better Transport for Better Health*, along with academics and representatives from TfL, Footways and Global Action Plan at King's College London

and Strand Aldwych, where the North Bank redevelopment has had a transformative impact on transport and health for all. Learn more about the research on page 17 of this newsletter.

## Friday – Business Day

Friday saw us at the Federation for Small Businesses for the launch of our business toolkit – *Better Transport for Better Business*, showing the benefits to businesses and the wider economy in particular of using rail rather than plane. Learn more about the toolkit on page 17 of your newsletter.

Following this, four London borough councils signed a 'Cargo Bike Charter' at Westminster Town Hall, pledging to switch council vans to cargo bikes where possible, while enabling residents and businesses to use pedal power to make deliveries and provide key services. We also travelled to see real-world application of car sharing and shared transport with Mobilityways, Transport East and Beryl in Norwich.



Silviya and Michael trying out an e-cargo bike. Photo by Devin Ainslie

Podcaster Emily Turner meeting Stagecoach drivers. Photo by Stagecoach



The new very light rail vehicle being developed



Celebrating the pedestrianisation of the Strand. Photo by John Russell



# Going local

## How Campaign for Better Transport is engaging more with local authorities

By Mark Morris

**We are expanding our local engagement to support sustainable transport in all corners of our country and give local authorities the power to improve their services, with the expertise of Campaign for Better Transport by their side.**

Many people think of transport provision as a national issue, with key decisions made solely by national politicians.

Turn on the radio or watch the evening news and you may hear a story about HS2 or a government minister talking about train fares, airports or future new roads. You might be tempted to think every aspect of transport provision is managed by centralised government.

But, much of the delivery happens locally. Councils have powers over local transport, including supporting bus services, ensuring safe walking and cycling, road repairs and parking provision. Larger councils serving urban areas can also work up plans for new forms of public transport, such as trams.

Local authorities also make key decisions on planning matters, often determining whether a new development encourages sustainable transport, or instead is designed mainly for motorists. These planning decisions have implications that last for many decades. Every local authority in the country could do more to support sustainable transport through better planning decisions.

### Bus journeys doubled under council scheme

In 2022, New Lubbethorpe in Leicester introduced a new direct bus service from the neighbourhood into the city, alongside a car club. A survey found that in the first year of these two initiatives, single occupancy car journeys had reduced by 20% and bus journeys doubled, with a quarter of New Lubbethorpe residents using the bus for their commute to work.



Photo by Gillian Lochhead / Flickr (CC BY-NC-ND 2.0)

### Active Travel England consulted on all large planning applications

From 1 June 2023 Active Travel England is officially a statutory consultee on all large planning applications (equal to or exceeding 150 homes, 1,500m<sup>2</sup> of floorspace or an area of 5 hectares) and will help deliver walking, wheeling and cycling infrastructure.

We have been examining councils' transport records and it is very clear there are huge variations in transport policy and delivery. Local authorities vary in their size, budgets and powers, which means some are more progressive in their ambitions for sustainable transport while others focus on catering for drivers. This is why Campaign for Better Transport is building on its existing work with councils

to reach out further. We want councils to raise their ambitions on sustainable transport and we want to support them by giving advice, sharing good practice and celebrating positive changes. We can also support councils in many other ways, whether assisting in how they undertake consultations on transport changes or undertaking specific research.

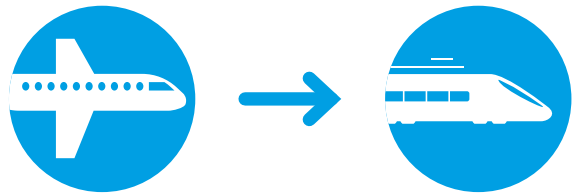
We also plan to increase our activity in Wales, furthering our engagement with the Welsh Government and with Welsh councils as well. Our current expansion of local work in England will support sustainable transport in all corners of the country – giving local authorities the power to improve their services with the expertise of our team by their side.

**If you are in conversations with your local councillor or transport officer, please do tell them about us, so we can help move transport further.**

# Plane speaking

## Moving more journeys from plane to train

By Solman Khan



**Some people choose to fly rather than take the train for domestic journeys, as flying can be cheaper and faster, but it is much more environmentally damaging. Our most recent piece of research makes the case for improving rail services so we can reduce domestic flights.**

The UK's aviation industry increased its carbon emissions by 124% between 1990 and 2019. The Government has published a strategy for net zero aviation, but it fails to look at managing demand. Instead, it focuses on zero-emission technologies, such as electric aircrafts and sustainable aviation fuel, for so-called 'guilt-free' flying. These innovations are highly uncertain, we don't know whether they can be developed on time or at all. Instead, we must tackle the root cause of the problem and fly less.

One area where this is imminently possible is domestic and near-Europe flights which are easily substituted with direct rail links. Our new report, *Plane Speaking: moving journeys from air to rail*, compared the top 20 domestic and three near-Europe flights with the rail alternatives in terms of emissions, cost, journey time, and passengers' ability to use their time productively.



Explore Plane Speaking here:  
[bettertransport.org.uk/planespeaking](https://bettertransport.org.uk/planespeaking)

**Our report found that travelling by train rather than plane is not only greener but it could have great benefits for passengers, including:**

### Train is often cheaper



Often, the main reason for choosing to fly over taking the train is cost. Budget airlines are able to offer cheap tickets due to aviation being notably undertaxed compared to other transport modes. However, while prices do vary, our study found 57% of the top domestic and near-Europe routes were cheaper (or had no significant price difference) by train. And this is without taking into account various concessions and discounts available with railcards.

### Flying takes longer door-to-door



In isolation, flying would be faster than taking a train. However, people often forget the time it takes door-to-door. When accounting for whole journey time, including travelling to and from the airport, the recommended time for check-in, bag drop-off and security, and disembarking, the flight time can easily increase by another three hours. By comparison, the train often takes you close to your destination with no waiting time. We found 70% of the top flight routes are quicker by rail.

We put this to the test last year when Paul Tuohy, our chief executive, and Norman Baker, our director of external affairs, raced from London's Piccadilly Circus

to George Square in Glasgow. The two arrived within seconds of each other, with Norman's train journey taking just two minutes longer than Paul travelling by plane but emitting far less carbon.

### Trains are more convenient



Flying can be justified where no train alternative exists, such as between mainline UK and Northern Ireland. However, where good rail infrastructure exists, trains provide a much more comfortable experience, with minimal queueing or waiting time and maximum time to use productively.

### Trains are much greener



The environmental cost of flying is always higher, producing at least seven times (with the latest estimates putting this number at 13) more carbon emissions per passenger km travelled than rail. Private jets are much worse. We calculated that by reducing substitutable domestic and near-Europe flights by half, we can prevent 409,598 tonnes of carbon emissions from being released into the atmosphere. This is equivalent to taking 283,000 cars off the road.

To help realise these huge carbon savings we created a *Fewer Flights Charter*, which calls on the Government to:



Require airlines to give passengers realistic travelling times for domestic flights



Introduce a new rate of Air Passenger Duty for all private jet passengers



Require airlines to print carbon emissions for domestic flights and the equivalent rail option on tickets



Introduce a domestic flight reduction target



Introduce a tax on domestic aviation fuel



Reverse the cut in Air Passenger Duty for domestic flights



Penalise airlines for flying empty aircraft unnecessarily



Apply VAT to every private jet flight



Invest in more railway lines and stations and improve fares and ticketing.

Please do let us know if you choose to travel by train over plane by emailing [supporterservices@bettertransport.org.uk](mailto:supporterservices@bettertransport.org.uk)



Sharing your experiences publicly, with your first name and location, will help us to campaign. If you would prefer to remain anonymous or for us not to share your experiences publicly please let us know in your email.

# News and updates

## Leading the call for a better transport future

By producing research that clearly demonstrates and justifies the need for better transport we're pushing for more investment in public and sustainable transport. We're making sure that solutions are readily available for policy and decision makers.

## Better Transport for Better Health

Transport affects our health in many ways. It impacts the air that we breathe, our activity levels, our mental health and our climate. Better Transport for Better Health is our briefing setting out the evidence on how transport affects health. It clearly shows what central government, local authorities and health providers – as well as individuals – can do.



Take a look for some great stats you can use to call on your council to do more at [bettertransport.org.uk/health](https://bettertransport.org.uk/health)

## Better Transport for Better Business

The Better Transport for Better Business toolkit clearly links investment in sustainable transport to economic growth. It is designed to help organisations – small or large, private companies or public sector – adopt greener transport options. It was created with the help of the business community and shows how doing the right thing environmentally can increase productivity, widen the workforce pool available, bring more customers and ultimately increase profits.



You can signpost your employer and local businesses to the toolkit at [bettertransport.org.uk/business](https://bettertransport.org.uk/business)

## Celebrating bus drivers

In July, Lilian Greenwood MP joined Campaign for Better Transport in Nottingham to present thank-you cards to bus drivers from Nottingham City Transport, Trent Barton and Kinchbus. The card contained messages of thanks from bus passengers across the country collected during Better Transport Week. Here are two of the messages:



Photo by Nottingham City Transport

“ *Thank you to all the bus drivers who call in at Hayfield. You are invariably smiling, courteous and look after your passengers well. A real lifeline for those who don't have cars and an adventure for those who are just discovering the delights of bus travel.* ”

*Pennie*

“ *A lifelong non-driver, I have as much cause to thank bus drivers as anyone. They perform an absolutely invaluable public service, helping to keep me in touch with my friends. Bless you all.* ”

*Ian*

## Calling for better public transport links to health services

In response to figures released by the UK government in August we made our voice heard in the media. We are calling for better public transport links to help improve people's access to health services. It takes public transport passengers twice as long to reach their nearest hospital as car drivers.

The figures were stark: Two thirds (66 per cent) of people in England cannot reach their nearest hospital by public transport in under 30 minutes with the average minimum journey time in urban towns and cities around 40 minutes. In rural villages it's almost double that at 71 minutes on average. Car drivers can access their nearest hospital in just 20 minutes on average.

The Government must recognise the health impacts of poor public transport reducing access to medical care. We want to see better integration between health providers, local authorities and transport operators to ensure good, sustainable public transport options for patients, visitors and NHS staff.

## Pushing back against bus cuts

We have been pushing back against cuts to buses that will leave people stranded. As Paul told the BBC, bus cuts are "leaving communities cut off from jobs, education, services, friends and family. We need an end to competitive funding and instead, campaign for a long-term investment in the form of a single funding pot for all local authorities".

## Tyne & Wear's inspiring transport

In July, we spent the day in Newcastle and Gateshead to find out about the latest developments in Tyne and Wear. There is a lot happening in the region and at Transport North East. There is hugely significant news of rail reopenings (the stuff of dreams for so many) and a new set of trains for the fantastic Newcastle Metro, Nexus. There are bus promotions, behaviour change initiatives, health interventions and the promise of a Metro Mayor next year.



Michael and Norman on the ferry with Huw Lewis of Nexus

# A gift in your will can help create **fairer, greener, better transport** for all.

**Public transport does amazing things.** It shrinks traffic jams, improves air quality and tackles climate change. It connects us to each other, improves our health and boosts the economy.

**Your legacy could be a better transport future.**

Learn more about including a gift in your will to Campaign for Better Transport by getting in touch with Sarah.

**Email:** [sarah@bettertransport.org.uk](mailto:sarah@bettertransport.org.uk)

**Visit:** [www.bettertransport.org.uk/legacy](http://www.bettertransport.org.uk/legacy)

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