

# londonage

Age UK London Magazine Summer 2019



## A Transport Network for all Londoners!

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**Paul Goulden**  
CEO  
Age UK London

## Welcome to the Summer 2019 edition of London Age Magazine - an Age-friendly Transport special!

As part of our work to make London an Age-friendly City, we recently asked our supporters to tell us all about London's transport network. Our Campaigns Officer John McGeachy takes us through the responses and how they will feed into future campaigns.

We also hear from TfL's Stuart Reid, who tell us all about the Vision Zero Action Plan, a bold strategy to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from London's roads by 2041. We then turn our attention to the many benefits of cycling with David Dansky from Bikeworks. Following that, Philip Corran highlights the challenges that everyday travel poses to older Londoners.

Finally we hand the floor to Kurban Haji who tells us all about his experiences as an older Londoner travelling across the capital.

A transport network that works for all ages is a vital feature of an Age-friendly City. I hope you enjoy reading this edition of London Age Magazine.

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# Top news

## Protecting Private Renters!

Building on the findings of our Living in Fear report, Age UK London are working to protect older private renters by campaigning for more private rented property licensing schemes to ensure landlords are protecting their tenants.

We would love to hear from anyone that rents privately and also from landlords interested in joining the campaign to make renting more Age-friendly.

To tell your story please email: [campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk)

## Section 21 Consultation

After announcing its intention to abolish Section 21 in April, the government has published its proposals for making this happen. Removal of Section 21 (the "no-fault eviction clause") was a key ask from Age UK London's Living in Fear research into the experiences of older private tenants.

The government has proposed several changes to the private rented sector in their consultation document, which is open for responses until 12 October.

Respond on the Generation Rent website: [www.generationrent.org](http://www.generationrent.org)

## Sign up to our Age-friendly Mailing List

To support our campaign to make London an Age-friendly City, Age UK London have launched a brand new mailing list! If you sign up, you'll receive campaigns updates, our monthly e-newsletter Revolve, and your usual copy of London Age straight to your inbox! You'll also have the chance to offer your thoughts on our future campaigns and a number of opportunities to get directly involved with our upcoming projects.

Sign up to our mailing list now at: [www.agefriendlylondon.org.uk](http://www.agefriendlylondon.org.uk)

## Ageing Better in Camden

Ageing Better in Camden has come a long way in the last 4 years, growing from a small circle of six organisations and a handful of local older people to now funding and working together with 30 community organisations reaching 7,000 older people in Camden.

Their Impact Report demonstrates the success of the partnership since 2015, including how the organisation has used testing and learning to provide the best possible services.

Read more on the Age UK London Blog: [www.ageuklondonblog.org.uk](http://www.ageuklondonblog.org.uk)



# Talking Age-friendly Transport Campaigns with Older Londoners

This summer, Age UK London asked older Londoners to give their opinions of the age-friendliness of London's transport network. Our Campaigns Officer John McGeachy takes us through some of the concerns raised and asks "Where do we go from here?"



**There are some subjects that you ask for people's opinion on and you're met with a blank stare or raised eyebrows. Transport, I'm pleased to say, is not one of them. In fact I think it's up there with the weather in a list of things people love to talk about. This of course is very helpful when you want to explore certain issues in more detail.**

## Talking transport

Last month we contacted our supporters to ask for thoughts and opinions about different modes of transport. Within minutes it was clear that people had a lot to say. Everyone's experience of transport is personal to them, but some clear themes soon emerged. Some respondents wrote about accessibility (or lack of) on the Underground, whilst others spoke about relying on buses for shopping, visiting friends and going to GP appointments. All in all over 80 issues were raised which could be grouped into 10 different categories.

**"A station may be 'step-free' but not fully accessible due to large train-to-platform gaps"**

The categories that people most commonly raised concerns about were 'steps and gaps' on the Tube and Rail Network, problems caused by discontinued bus routes, and journeys requiring several changes.

In the 'buses' category, people raised a huge range of issues from buses stopping too far from the kerb to jerky driving and pulling away before people had a chance to sit down. Other categories our respondents raised concerns about included access to toilets, signage and concessionary transport such as Taxicard and Dial-a-Ride.

38% of Tube stations will be 'step-free' by 2024 but that of course still means that six in ten stations won't be. Indeed a station may be 'step-free' by name but still not fully accessible due to large train-to-platform gaps. In addition, 'step-free' navigation of particular stations can still mean walking significant distances.

Discontinued, altered or shortened bus journeys were an issue raised by people in both inner and outer-London Boroughs and the quality of service for people that use Taxicard and Dial-a-Ride seems to be a lottery depending on where they live.



## The bigger picture

Whilst there are hundreds, if not thousands, of separate transport issues, it is useful to think about the above as part of the overall picture. When we think of transport we often think of trains or buses but walking is in fact the most common means of getting from A to B for older Londoners. Some may be surprised by this statistic but it emphasises how important clutter-free and even pavements are.

In addition, two thirds of older Londoners travel regularly by bus, which goes some way to explaining the high proportion of issues raised about bus driving standards in London.

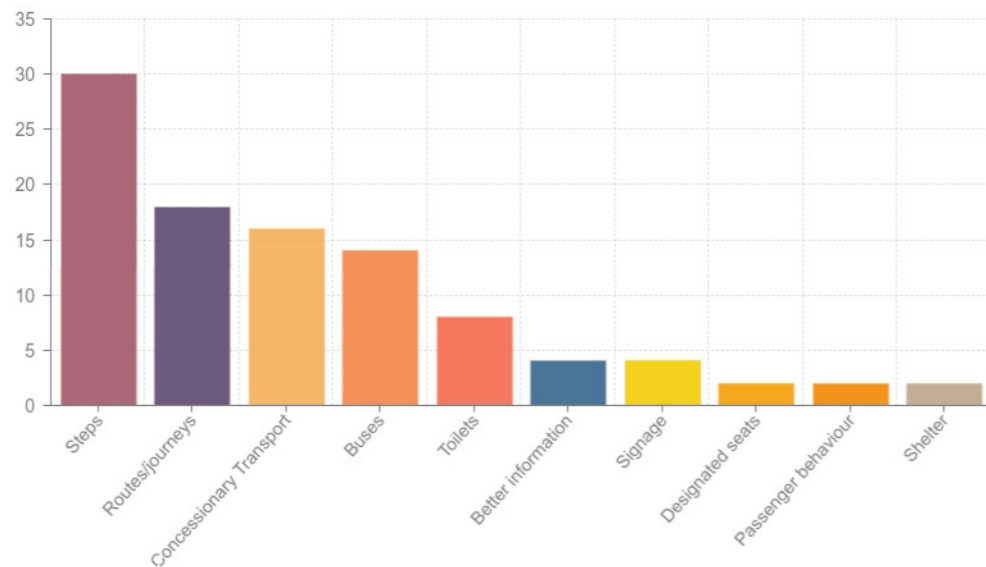
Affordability is a vital part of making London's transport more age-friendly. Although there is nothing to suggest either the Freedom Pass or 60+ Oyster Card are under serious threat, you can bet that any risk of losing these vital concessions would be met with huge opposition.

## Local and London-wide

Whilst big infrastructure and policy commitments from Transport for London and other rail operators will have a significant role in making London's transport age-friendly, it's important to recognise that campaigning by members of the public can make a huge difference.

Last month I met members of the brilliant Hadley Wood Rail User Group (HWRUG) who have won several victories since 2015 when they started campaigning for Govia Thameslink to make Hadley Wood station more accessible. Four years on and the station, which is served by Thameslink and Great Northern services, now offers one of the very few step-free routes for local residents wishing to travel north to places including Hatfield and Welwyn Garden City. Passengers wishing to travel step-free into London still need to take the train one stop north to change at Potter's Bar, so the group have campaigned successfully to ensure no additional fare is required.

Transport Issues Raised by Older Londoners by Percentage



### Where do we go from here?

Inspired by groups such as HWRUG we will soon launch a series of ‘listening and action’ local travel events, which will see older campaigners meeting with station managers and Transport for London representatives at travel hubs across London in order to show TfL staff the issues. Crucially, the discussions will take place at stations, bus stands and on pavements so that residents can point out and discuss the issues as they see them. Many of these action days will take place in areas highlighted in responses to our transport email back in June.

We’re hoping that this action at a local level will complement our London-wide campaigning to make transport more age-friendly. As part of the campaign, we are working with older people’s organisations and transport campaigners to draw up an Age-friendly Transport Action Plan for London containing steps that can be taken in the short, medium and long-term to make transport more age-friendly.

We hope that the Action Plan will have a lasting impact and it will be used to hold both Transport for London and the Mayor to account.

Another way to hold both TfL and the Mayor to account is by working with London Assembly members, which is why we are pleased to be giving evidence next month to the Assembly’s Transport Committee as part of their investigation into ‘London’s transport now and in the future’.

The more of us that work together, the stronger our campaigns will be, so if you haven’t yet signed up to see how you can get involved in the Age-friendly London campaigns please email [campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk](mailto:campaigns@ageuklondon.org.uk). If you think a friend, family member or neighbour would like to get involved please do share this with them.

**To learn more about Age UK London’s Age-friendly Transport campaign, please head to: [www.agefriendlylondon.org.uk](http://www.agefriendlylondon.org.uk).**

## Vision Zero - Making London’s Transport Safer and more Age-friendly



In July 2018, the Mayor, TfL, and Metropolitan Police launched the Vision Zero Action Plan, a bold strategy to eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from London’s roads by 2041. Stuart Reid, Interim Director of Vision Zero, tells us how this can be achieved.

**Remaining active throughout life is extremely important to all of us, even if it’s just walking to the shops, the train station or to see a friend. It helps us remain independent and to many is the key to happiness.**

London offers great opportunities for people to walk and cycle, whether taking advantage of the Capital Ring or simply using the capital’s streets to unlock our fantastic parks and waterways. When people are out and about it is vital that they feel safe and navigate themselves confidently.

As part of this, the Mayor of London and Transport for London have committed to the bold ambition to reduce the number of deaths and serious injuries on London’s transport network to zero by 2041. This ambition stretches across all of London, on railways, trams and Tubes, but our biggest challenge is on our streets.

One year ago, TfL published its Vision Zero action plan which details how we will try and turn the tide of deaths on our network, with particular focus on our roads. Last year, 111 families tragically lost a loved one in a traffic collision in London.

A further 3,954 were seriously injured but the number of people impacted by this road trauma – families, friends, and whole communities – is greater still. This scale of death and injury would be unthinkable on any other transport mode today.

It is therefore astounding that road deaths have been accepted as the price paid for moving around a big city. We can and should no longer accept this; people have the right to travel around our city without the risk of being killed or seriously injured.

It is a significant challenge, but with bold action, and by working together, we can achieve this aim.

We are investing to reduce road danger across the capital, we’re transforming London’s most dangerous junctions to make them safer, developing the highest standard of safety for our bus fleet, and later this year, we’ll begin the roll out of the world’s first Direct Vision Standard scheme for Heavy Goods Vehicles (HGVs) to eliminate their blind spots.

In London, HGVs are significantly overrepresented in collisions where people walking and cycling are killed,



and the most common contributory factor reported in these collisions is that the driver's vision was affected due to a vehicle blind spot.

These collisions occur predominantly in slow moving traffic and away from formal crossing points. We also see a concerning trend of increasing numbers of older people being involved in collisions with larger vehicles on London's roads.

Today a lorry driver can be as much as nine feet above the road and have no vision of the pavement or the people using it.

Our Direct Vision Standard scheme will effectively eliminate these blind spots; ensuring people walking, cycling, and riding motorbikes are far more easily seen by drivers, thus preventing the likelihood of a collision.

It is not a silver bullet and we must all remain watchful around HGVs, not least because it will take time for this standard to be in place for all lorries driving in London.

We are also taking steps to make sure that our bus fleet is the safest in the world. We are currently working with Age UK London and others to develop a distinctive sound for our new electric and hybrid buses; a vital step in the safety of new efficient, economical and environmentally friendly technology.

Alerting people walking and cycling to the presence of slow moving buses is crucial if we are to keep people safe on London's streets. It is equally important that we take measures to ensure that bus drivers can not speed and have the best visibility of the surrounding area as possible.

The process of making London's bus fleet the safest in the world for passengers and road users will begin this year with the first phase of improvements. However until we reach our target of nobody being killed or seriously injured on or by a bus our work will not be done. We must make sure we continue to use cutting edge technology to improve safety and do not get complacent.

#### When crossing near Lorries and larger vehicles, TfL advise you to always:

- Make eye contact with the lorry driver, where possible, to increase the chance that the driver knows you are there.
- Avoid cutting across the road in front of a lorry even in slow moving traffic, as the vehicle could move at any time.
- Do not cross directly underneath the windscreen or from the side of the lorry, if the driver does not see you they will assume their path is clear.
- If in any doubt about crossing in front of a lorry, let it move away and past you before you cross.



Reducing the speed of London's roads will also help make a huge stride towards achieving Vision Zero. 20mph should and will become the new normal in London and across the UK's urban areas. Speed kills, plain and simple. If you are struck by a car travelling at 20mph your chances of being killed or seriously injured reduce by 80 per cent, when compared to a car travelling at 30mph.

We are leading the way by making our road network 20mph, a consultation on which closed recently, and we hope the boroughs will follow suit. Only 5 per cent of the road network in London is controlled by TfL so it is vital that we work in partnership with boroughs, charities and local people to achieve new speed limits and change behaviour.

To eliminate all deaths and serious injuries from our streets we must be ambitious and impatient in our efforts to create the safest streets, introduce safe speeds, regulate dangerous vehicles and change our behaviour - because we all have a role to play.

**To learn all about TfL's Vision Zero Action Plan for London, head to:**

[www.content.tfl.gov.uk/vision-zero-action-plan.pdf](http://www.content.tfl.gov.uk/vision-zero-action-plan.pdf)



# Gearing up for Older Riders: The Benefits of Cycling for Older Londoners

There are many benefits of cycling for both our physical and mental health, yet it's difficult for many older Londoners to get out and about on a bike. Bikeworks' David Dansky explains why that is and shows how the organisation is helping to change the situation.



**Sitting in a picturesque square in the small Italian town of Este last year I watched an endless stream of older people enjoying an evening cycle.**

Some were carrying shopping, others meeting their friends for an Aperol Spritz and a slice of pizza, or standing in small groups huddled together with their bikes, chatting. All looked happy, fit and healthy. For them, cycling is a normal everyday activity. The square was full of life with the hum of human interaction, rather than noisy traffic and smelly car fumes. Such a scene in UK towns would be very unlikely.

The benefits of lifelong cycling for individuals and society are obvious. Cycling offers improved mobility, a feeling of independence, and a sense of belonging to the world via enjoyment of fresh air and social engagement. There are also massive health benefits to individuals from this gentle non-weight-bearing aerobic exercise as well as wider benefits to society: a reduced burden on the NHS; fewer emissions and less noise pollution in the environment; reduced isolation and so much more.

Seeing older people out and about in public is rare here and older people on cycles even rarer. If we can encourage older folk to be visible cycling, that may unlock the possibility of riding for anyone.

## Car-centric Britain

The UK is a motorised society, our public realm is designed around the car. People use cars for trips that could easily be walked or cycled, resulting in an environment where walking and cycling isn't pleasant and feels dangerous. Mobility is a major issue for older people, especially if they don't drive. Many people rely on others to get about, in taxis or mobility buses to make even short necessary trips, all this adding to the number of vehicles on our roads maintaining the car-centric status quo. Catch 22.

The need to encourage people to walk and cycle is even more acute in London due to the expected exponential increase in the capital's population. If nothing is done there will be gridlock on the roads and overcrowding on public transport.



## London's changing streetscape

Earlier this year an old cycling buddy came to London on a business trip from Los Angeles. He left London about 20 years ago. I met him in Waterloo Station and we jumped on a Lime Bike, one of the new dockless electric cycles which are rented through an app.

At mid-morning we rode along the Cycle Superhighway on the embankment to The City, through Bank junction (now only open to walkers, cyclists and buses), before stopping in Hackney for a coffee. The entire route consisted of 20mph streets and traffic-calmed Quietways. He was astonished how easy it was, how few drivers we encountered over the 5 miles we rode, and how the occasional driver we did encounter seemed to be happy to drive behind us as we rode two-

abreast, chatting. He was particularly impressed to see young mothers carrying their children in Christiana cycles, the E5 Bakery delivering bread on a cargo cycle, and a number of people over 60 riding, including a grey-bearded Rabbi on a tricycle with some holy books in a basket on the front.

He noted how things had changed in some parts in London compared to when he lived here. Back then we seemed to know every other rider in London who were all young men, as were we!

Over the past 15 years, Transport for London and some London Boroughs have worked hard to re-design London's streets with various schemes including the Mini-Holland, the Healthy Streets and Liveable Neighbourhoods programmes.





By reclaiming streets and whole Boroughs from motorists, more diverse groups feel more able to cycle, including women and older people. This is still a work in progress though.

In addition to changes in infrastructure, pioneering companies such as Cycle Training UK (now wound up), and Bikeworks have been offering free cycle skills training to adults and running special programmes aiming to encourage hard-to-reach groups to cycle. Two of these programmes in particular have enabled older people to enjoy the benefits of riding.

### Positive Spin Cycling

This project enables people living with dementia to ride with their families. Positive Spin takes place in a number of London parks where people drop in and ride various cycles around the park and occasionally on traffic-calmed roads.

The benefits of cycling for people living with dementia are immense. People taking part get to make choices such as which cycle to ride, and where to go. They get to exercise and everyone involved benefits from the social interactions both with each other, and those who are spending time at the park, including children and dog walkers.

### Ride Side-by-Side

Meet Josephine (pictured above). Josephine had her leg amputated 2 years ago. She lives in a Hanover sheltered housing estate and gets about using a mobility scooter. She agreed to take part in a pilot project, funded by Hackney Council and the Department for Transport called Ride Side-by-Side. This involves riding in a cycle taxi that offers people over 60 the opportunity to make a trip of their choice using a special side-by-side cycle.



After her first trip, Josephine said that she hadn't been further than the end of the street for the past 2 years and that she felt like a champion. She regularly books a ride to explore the borough with one of the Pilots, named Erica.

Most people booking the service choose to do so for leisure and exercise, while around 30% use the service to get to the shops or visit family. When evaluating this programme, we found that people used the service instead of booking a dial-a-ride mobility bus, a taxi, or getting a lift in someone's car. Many people said that they wouldn't have gone out at all were it not for Ride Side-by-Side. Everyone said that they enjoyed the social element, the ability to sit next to someone and chat, which is not as easily done on other cycles such as tandems!

Following the success of the Ride-Side-by-Side pilot (including winning the Health

Street Award for best innovation in cycling and walking), Bikeworks is planning to roll this out across London with a view to giving older people a viable alternative to a motor vehicle for making short trips. Jane Caldwell, the CEO of Age UK East London is helping with advice about referrals to the scheme.

In this era of climate emergency, people need to change their behaviour, especially regarding how they move around. The humble cycle is one of the solutions, especially in cities, towns and villages. I am looking forward to the day when I can sit in a pub in a square in Britain and watch the locals pull up on their cycles to join me for a pint!

**To learn more about the ways in which Bikeworks are supporting older cyclists, or to get involved yourself, head to:**

[www.bikeworks.org.uk](http://www.bikeworks.org.uk)



# Age, Accessibility and Everyday Travel across the Capital

An accessible and affordable transport network is a vital feature of an Age-friendly City. Philip Corran, a researcher at the Tavistock Institute of Human Relations, discusses the difficulties older Londoners face with everyday travel and the impact on their health.



**Everyday travel is essential for leading a healthy and fulfilling life. We can see its importance in relation to both physical health and broader wellbeing.**

The exercise we get from walking and cycling, even if just to and from the nearest bus stop, is vitally important. Meanwhile, remaining socially included is another important determinant of health. Accessing services, social connections, visiting shops, and being able to volunteer; all these things are made possible through daily travel. Those who find travel more difficult are therefore at greater risk of social exclusion. Although I want to be careful about perpetuating stereotypes of older people as lonely and vulnerable, we should not overlook the impact that being less able to travel can have on their ability to socialise; even short shopping trips involve interacting with other people, and reaching friends and family often requires travelling.

More broadly, we can look at the ways everyday travel allows older people to achieve a higher quality of life. Travelling helps them to maintain their sense of independence and self-worth, access parks and other green spaces, and

maintain a sense of ownership in their local area. If we want London to be an age-friendly environment (that is, to support senior citizens to be healthy, live life to the full, and be included in wider society), then we need to facilitate their ability to travel with ease.

## Why travel can become difficult

Older people travel less than younger people. My research has demonstrated that older Londoners become less likely to leave the house on any given day than younger Londoners, a decrease which is not explained by changes in health or employment status (although these two factors have their own impact upon one's propensity to travel). On average, 16 per cent of Londoners did not leave their house on any given day, with people in their 70s twice as likely as people of working age to stay at home all day. Those over the age of 80 are almost 4 times as likely to spend the whole day at home than people of working age. The older we are, the less likely we become to travel, yet the importance of travel remains the same. This is particularly the case for Londoners reporting a long-term health condition or disability, who were



1.8 times more likely to spend the whole day at home than those who reported none.

Managing chronic health conditions, impairments, or the disablement that can accompany them, is a challenge which particularly impacts older people. However, London's transport system does have elements which should support them in managing these health conditions or impairments while travelling. The capital presents a fairly unique environment for older people in relation to other British cities. Over 90% of Londoners live within 200 metres of a bus stop and all of the city's buses have been fitted with wheelchair spaces, ramps, low-floors and 'kneeling' suspension since 2005.

Older people in London also benefit from the freedom pass, those over 85 or experiencing mobility impairment are eligible for door-to-door Dial-a-Ride buses, and Local Authorities in the city offer varying degrees of subsidised taxi travel and preferential parking.

However, despite all of these factors and the subsidies received from central government, London's transport infrastructure and built environment can often feel hostile for older people, especially those experiencing disability or chronic illness. Many rail and underground stations remain inaccessible and will continue to be so for the foreseeable future. Meanwhile, overcrowding makes travel difficult during peak periods, and streets often contain barriers like high



curbs and uneven pavements. In public spaces, especially on longer residential streets, adequate places to rest can be few and far between. The difficulties posed by these obstacles can mean that older people need to spend greater periods of time at home. Whilst this is not an inherently negative situation, we know that some of this increased propensity to stay at home is the product of environmental restrictions.

“I leave the house twice a week minimum to do routine things. If I was doing a major trip, that would have to be one of my two trips for the week and I would have to allow myself a minimum of one day in between to rest. The longer and more difficult the journey, the longer I would need to rest.”

- Mary, 65, stroke survivor

### Affordability, reliability, and frequency

Three of the World Health Organisation’s criteria for age-friendly travel are affordability, reliability, and frequency. Besides from the areas in Outer London containing sparser transport links and less regular buses, the city scores fairly well on these terms. However, the picture is drastically different for those experiencing disability.

*“In public spaces, especially on longer residential streets, adequate places to rest can be few and far between.”*

Older disabled Londoners using wheelchairs often have to contend with prams and pushchairs occupying the wheelchair space, as well as drivers who are reluctant to adequately intervene when other passengers’ courtesy falls short. The energy, both mental and physical, required to mount high curbs, navigate uneven pavements, and to walk the sometimes extensive distances between different tube lines places a disproportionate burden on older disabled people. This undoubtedly contributes to the decreased propensity of older people to travel. However, it also makes the process of travelling far more stressful and difficult for many older Londoners.

“Disability does restrict you. You can’t just go. You know I have to think ‘well I can’t do that’”

- Joyce, 81, living with COPD/CVD

Generally, people undertake their day-to-day travel under the assumption that trips are routinised; they will be predictable, expedient, and therefore mundane. With the onset of chronic illness or impairment, not only can one’s body become less predictable; so too can the environment. London is built to cater to those who can climb steps, walk longer distances, and navigate crowds with agility. When we consider these issues, we have to alter our understandings of reliability and frequency as singular notions. Frequency is a different thing to a wheelchair user who is only able to board every third bus during peak hours. Meanwhile, routine trips entail the unexpected, placing a greater strain on one’s mental and physical capacities.



This has a range of detrimental effects on older people: Travelling with others becomes more difficult, their sense of independence is undermined by the restrictions the transport system places on them, and maintaining a routine can become difficult. In addition, more time has to be spent planning for contingencies in case something goes wrong (undermining their ability to travel somewhere spontaneously). These are all important factors in supporting older people’s quality of life. As it stands, older disabled people’s ability to travel - and therefore ability to protect and attain health and wellbeing - is impeded.

This is not the case for all older people, however, and progress is being made: more stations are becoming step-free, TfL’s ‘healthy streets’ strategy is

improving the environment older pedestrians must navigate when travelling, and organisations like Alzheimer’s UK have seen success in campaigning for better training for staff in the transport system. Nevertheless, the pace of change remains slow. As long as this is the case, older disabled Londoners will face formidable obstacles in achieving healthy and fulfilling later lives.

**To learn more about making London’s transport network more age-friendly, head to:**

[www.agefriendlylondon.org.uk](http://www.agefriendlylondon.org.uk)



## In the hotseat...

Usually we place a member of staff in the hotseat and ask them all about their work at Age UK London. However this time round, we're hearing from older Londoner [Kurban Haji](#), who gives us his thoughts on London's transport network - what works well and what should change!

### What journeys do you take most regularly?

I use the bus frequently. Early on Mondays and Tuesdays I get the number 436 or 36 from Camberwell to New Cross before changing on to the 177 or 53 to Deptford. I run the Theatre group and the 'Meet at the Albany' activity and lunch club for over-60s at the Albany Theatre In Deptford. It takes an hour or so to set up so I need to get there early.

### Do you have a favourite journey?

My favourite journey is from Camberwell to the South Bank Centre or Tate Modern. I go there when I want to get away from things - it's 'me time'. I've seen the South Bank change a lot over the years. On Fridays they have free concerts at the Royal Festival Hall and sometimes I go for a coffee or a pint at the British Film Institute. It's a chance to just relax.

### Do you encounter any difficulties on journeys?

I've noticed that some of the newer bus drivers don't move their vehicles forward, even when several buses arrive at the same stop at the same time. If the bus I want is the one at the back you have to run past the first two buses and by the time you get there it is too late and the bus has pulled away! The stop I use is the final stop for one route but it seems that

when drivers are finishing their routes they are reluctant to allow space for buses still in service behind them. Sometimes the buses that pull away before you can reach them are the same ones that wait for three minutes three stops later to 'regulate' the service!

When travelling home I need to leave before the schools on the route finish as some of the school children do not offer you their seats. We have the technology for announcements on the bus to ask people to offer seats to those who are unable to stand for long. There are other frequent announcements on buses and you have announcements and signs on the Underground so it should be possible really.

Sometimes the drivers are unaware that you are trying to get on their bus so I get out a handkerchief to grasp the handle so they notice me. There have been a lot of training initiatives but there is also high turnover of bus drivers. I also think there should be more prominent information about where toilets at stations are.

*"Sometimes the buses that pull away before you can reach them are the same ones that wait for three minutes three stops later to 'regulate' the service!"*

### Has the type of transport you get changed over the years?

The buses have become better because they have introduced more routes where I live because we are not near an Underground station.

Over the years there have been promises to extend the Bakerloo Line to cover Camberwell, but no luck yet - there is a street in Camberwell called Station Road but there is no station there! People first started talking about an extension back in the 70s!

### What improvements would you like to see?

Better information - there can't be too much information! People are always looking at their phones so perhaps they could receive messages telling them to look out for older people that may need a seat!

Some vulnerable people take their lives in their hands if they want to travel. People think just because someone is walking then they are fine. If I stand, people wouldn't know that I've had two

knee operations. If people see someone with a stick they need to show empathy and understand that it is a walking aid not a fashion statement!

I would also like to see people volunteering as station 'buddies' or 'travel mentors' in order to support people who may need assistance. I think this would make a real difference.

### Have you campaigned for transport changes before?

I've spoken out on many issues for over 20 years. In 2011 I was filmed at the Transport Museum for a bus driver training video. The Mayor of London needs to facilitate this to happen again.

### Thanks for talking to us, Kurban!

**If you would like to feature in the hotseat in our next issue of London Age - an Age-friendly Housing special - please get in touch using the contact details in the next column.**

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David Dansky  
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*London Age* highlights issues which affect older people in the capital. It is produced to support Age UK London's mission to improve the quality of life for older Londoners and to enhance their status and influence.

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@ageuklondon

Age UK London works across the capital to improve the quality of life for older people and to enhance their status and influence.

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