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[For immediate release](#)

Age UK London have expressed profound disappointment in the changes set out by Transport for London today to temporarily suspend Older Person's Freedom Pass and 60+ Oyster photocard travel concessions at peak times (04:30 to 09:00).

In setting out the change, which will apply during weekdays and take effect from Monday 15th June, Transport for London has again failed to adequately acknowledge older Londoners with no choices available to them about when and how they travel. London has the highest pensioner poverty rate in the country and many of those hardest hit will already be on low incomes.

Older Londoners have told Age UK London that they will travel with extreme caution as London recovers from the COVID-19 pandemic and many have said that they will avoid public transport entirely. Whilst the suspension of concessions will make only a limited impact on crowding it will have a grave impact on those with no choice but to use early morning public transport. Older Londoners reluctantly taking early morning journeys are only making them because they have no alternative.

Age UK London is particularly concerned about the impact on older Londoners that have early morning medical appointments. Many appointments will be rearranged from earlier in lockdown and delays will already be a source of great anxiety.

Walking and cycling is being encouraged as an alternative. Whilst this will be a suitable option for some it is not a realistic option for many.

London's charities on the frontline of the COVID-19 pandemic, including 23 local Age UKs, are facing unprecedented challenges and many rely on older volunteers that use public transport so they can support vital services throughout the day.

Age UK London is pleased that Disabled Freedom Pass holders will still be able to use free travel. Older Londoners with disabilities are being encouraged to apply for a temporary Disabled Freedom Pass but this will be very difficult for many people, particularly those without internet access.

With just 10 days until changes coming into effect we are concerned that many people including those that might only check their emails at the library, will not be aware of the changes until it is too late exacerbating the stress that many taking essential journeys already feel at this time.

Age UK London CEO, Abigail Woods, says:

“Older Londoners are among the most responsible travellers in the capital. People are not getting on a tube train or bus at 7am to make social trips, they will be doing so because they have no other choice - for example key workers with shifts starting before 9am. Accessible travel can transform lives and we are very concerned that there is no indication about how long the suspension will last”

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Notes to Editors

1. Age UK London is the London-wide charity that campaigns for an Age-friendly London We work with over 400 older people's organisations in London to ensure that the voices of older Londoners are heard by decision makers across our city. We deliver campaigns and projects that improve the lives of older Londoners and their health and wellbeing. We work to tackle the deep-rooted problems faced by the most vulnerable older Londoners.

www.ageuk.org.uk/london

www.twitter.com/ageuklondon

www.facebook.com/ageuklondon

2. Spokespeople:

- Print media quotes: Abigail Wood (Chief Executive)

- Interviews: John McGeachy (Campaigns Officer)

3. 24% of pensioners in London are living in poverty according to DWP figures released on 28 March 2019. This compares to 16% of pensioners in the UK as a whole. (<https://www.gov.uk/government/statistics/households-below-average-income-199495-to-201718>)