

Mayor extends half-price travel scheme



Thousands of unemployed Londoners are set to benefit from the Capital's half-price bus and tram travel scheme, which will be extended from 1 April this year.

Those in receipt of Job Seeker's Allowance or the new Employment and Support Allowance will be eligible for the scheme. It is designed to help unemployed people get back to work, by making it easier for them to travel to interviews and access libraries, job centres and other amenities.

The concession is currently available to those on Income Support and was introduced this month as part of Transport for London's (TfL's) new fares package. Its extension means that a further 150,000 people should benefit over the next year.

Mayor of London Boris Johnson said: 'The severity of the economic downturn and its sharp impact on Londoners has required urgent practical action. I want to do all I can to ease the burden at this time, and have asked TfL to introduce a number of targeted fares reductions and

concessions to help those on low incomes who will feel the impact most strongly.'

It will also help those who benefited from the previous Income Support discount scheme who are now ineligible due to Government changes to the benefits system.

The extension of the half-price scheme is part of the Mayor's Economic Recovery Action Plan, which sets out a detailed £3bn package of measures to get the Capital back on track through the economic downturn.

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Tube transformation remains on track



London Underground's (LU's) Public Private Partnership (PPP) Report for 2007/08 has shown that maintenance and renewal of the Tube is keeping up with record demand for services.

Despite the collapse of Metronet, which entered Administration in July 2007 and transferred to TfL in May 2008, the Tube carried more passengers and ran more trains

than ever before, clocking up in excess of 70 million km of passenger service during the year. Under PPP arrangements, 87 station modernisations and refurbishments were completed by 2007/08, with 28 finished during the year.

In addition, 28km of track was renewed, bringing the total under PPP arrangements to 143km across the network.

For more information, go to tfl.gov.uk/pppreport

Work starts on east London bus scheme

Construction has started in Barking town centre on the first section of the East London Transit (ELT) scheme.

The high capacity bus system is to feature state-of-the-art, environmentally friendly double-decker buses and will run from Ilford to Dagenham Dock via the town centre.

It will boost services for local residents and help support the regeneration of east London. People will also see improvements to the appearance of roads along the route with new trees and paving, plus well-lit bus shelters offering service information and better accessibility.



Construction began last month, just weeks after TfL received confirmation of an additional £18.5m in funding, which will extend the scheme by linking the Barking Riverside Development to the town centre and Dagenham Dock.

The extra funds, provided by the Department for Communities and Local Government and the Department for Transport, mean that both planned phases of the ELT are now fully funded.

The ELT will provide additional connections to the Underground, Docklands Light Railway (DLR), National Rail stations, other local bus services and, in the future, Crossrail.

For more information, go to tfl.gov.uk/elt

TfL in Stonewall top five

Leading gay and lesbian equalities organisation, Stonewall, has rated TfL fifth in its list of the top 100 UK employers for lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgendered (LGBT) staff.

Its annual Workplace Equality Index is the definitive national benchmark of Britain's top employers of LGBT staff. TfL's position is one place better than 2008's ranking of sixth and the organisation was also cited as an example of best practice for career development.

Fast fact

Ten buses per hour are expected to carry up to 6.2 million people during the ELT's first year.

DLR Woolwich Arsenal extension opens for business



The new Woolwich Arsenal DLR station is now open, providing another vital north-south link to the Capital.

It joins the DLR King George V station north of the river with

Woolwich Arsenal in the south. As with the rest of the DLR network, the station has step-free access to all platforms and trains.

The extension provides better access to employment,

education and leisure facilities for the communities of Woolwich, Silvertown and North Woolwich. It will also play an important role in delivering the Olympic transport network.

It offers direct interchanges with mainline services on the North Kent line, the planned Greenwich Waterfront Transit scheme, more than 100 bus routes, eight Tube lines and coach, taxi and riverboat services.

Fast fact

Thanks to the new extension, people can now travel from Woolwich to London City Airport in six minutes; to Canary Wharf in 20 minutes; Stratford in 23 minutes and Bank in 28 minutes. In the peak period, trains will leave every six to seven minutes.

Radio system hits the Airwave

A hi-tech radio communications system that has been rolled out on the Underground has now been unveiled.

The secure service, called Airwave, is used by the police and allows officers to communicate with each other quickly to ensure an effective response to any incident. It has been delivered on the Tube network five months ahead of schedule and is now improving the safety of passengers across the system.

Airwave has proved invaluable at large scale events such as New Year's Eve, the Notting Hill Carnival and football matches.

More BTP officers pledged for trains and stations

Mayor Boris Johnson has announced an extra 50 British Transport Police officers to patrol Network Rail trains and stations.

TfL will be investing more than £6m during the next two years to fund the additional officers on non-TfL services, as part of the Mayor's commitment to crack down on low-level crime and disorder.

Over the next few months, they will provide reassurance and security, particularly after dark, at more than 100 stations and routes in the Capital's outer boroughs.



Bakerloo station work now underway



LU is undertaking a substantial refurbishment of its Bakerloo line stations north of Queen's Park.

The work will begin in phases across the line. It started in January at the first four stations (Queen's Park, North Wembley, Kenton and South Kenton) and is expected to be complete by spring 2010.

It will provide greater CCTV coverage and more security, better station lighting, enhanced

public address systems, accessibility improvements such as tactile strips and new customer Help points.

LU took the responsibility for day-to-day management of the stations (except Willesden Junction) from Silverlink in November 2007. Since then, changes have included a constant staff presence during operating hours to provide increased security, better customer service information and station deep cleans.

New bus route introduced for west London

TfL has introduced a new bus route between Central Middlesex Hospital and Maida Hill in west London.

Route 228 runs via Harlesden, Shepherd's Bush and Holland Park and improves access to the White City estate, the hospital and Park Royal industrial estate. It calls at the newly opened bus station in White City and provides a convenient link for shoppers at Westfield London.

Single-deck buses operate on the route, running about every 12 minutes during the day and every 20 minutes during the evenings and on Sundays.

Keeping the Capital moving



TfL recently joined forces with the London Civic Forum (LCF) to provide members of the Capital's voluntary and community sector with more information about the organisation's 10-year Business Plan.

The 'Keeping London Moving' event, which attracted more than 120 people, also enabled the

LCF to present findings from its research into transport priorities in the Capital.

Speakers at the event included TfL's Chief Finance Officer, Stephen Critchley, and Kulveer Ranger, the Mayor's Director of Transport. There was also an opportunity for guests to attend workshops on gender and disability issues, engaging with TfL, plus climate change and the environment.

For more information

Further details are available from: Group Government & Stakeholder Relations, Transport for London, Windsor House, 42-50 Victoria Street, London SW1H 0TL. Telephone: 020 7126 4126, email: gsr@tfl.gov.uk

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