

RESEARCH SUMMARY

Title	Travel Ambassador Effectiveness at the Elephant & Castle Roundabout	
Objective	To understand the effectiveness of the Travel Ambassadors at the Elephant & Castle roadworks and to assess whether they should be rolled out to other works locations	
Date	April 2016	Agency Future Thinking
Methodology	Qualitative intercept interviews conducted at the Elephant & Castle road works site. 24 pedestrians interviewed over a three hour period.	

Abstract

The role of Travel Ambassadors (TAs) is to mitigate the impact of the improvement works on customers and users by providing accurate and personalised travel information in and around the roadworks area.

The presence of TAs makes pedestrians feel that TfL cares about their customers. During observation, the majority of pedestrians didn't stop to talk to the TAs, however, most customers, once they understood the role of TAs, felt they work well as a reassuring presence, however TfL need to ensure their role is clearly communicated.

Key findings

There was a sense that more information on the TAs and their role could be helpful in encouraging members of the public to interact with them. Posters around the Elephant & Castle station entrances and exits highlighting what the Travel Ambassadors do would help pedestrians understand their role and encourage more people to ask for advice. In addition, making alterations to the high-vis jackets worn by TAs could also help with visibility and understanding i.e. moving the 'Travel Ambassador' text further down the jacket and increasing font size.

Positioning of the TAs at identified problem hotspots is key in optimising their value e.g. ensuring TAs are placed at areas where people are often looking to cross or particularly complicated junctions. Encouraging TAs to be proactive in their interaction with pedestrians may also help make their role clearer and encourage pedestrians to ask for help.

Travel Ambassadors' knowledge levels were perceived to be good and the leaflet successfully provided useful information where desired.

There is potential to roll out TAs to other roadwork locations, however, it will be key to overcome barriers surrounding visibility and understanding, in order to ensure value to pedestrians.

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