



Safe and healthy streets

Transport for London's Director of Network Management explains some of the techniques the organisation is using to make its streets safer and healthier

WORDS BY **GLYNN BARTON**

This year got off to great start in Network Management with Richard Bristow, one of our original UTC team, being awarded an MBE for his services to transport. Richard worked for over 30 years to develop our traffic signal system into one of the most sophisticated in the world with the use of SCOOT. He trained and inspired a whole generation of traffic signal controllers as well as being a key part in the 2012 Olympic bid, working to get a vehicle from Hyde Park in central London to Stratford in the quickest possible time. We are all immensely proud that he has been given such a prestigious honour.

With this positive start to the year we are continuing our work towards the Vision Zero goal for 2041. That aims to see all deaths and serious injuries eliminated from London's transport network.

Safe

Making our network safe for all road users has always been a priority and even more so

now. The number of cyclists and pedestrians that use our network, particularly in central London has increased over recent years and it is important that we make our streets as safe and inviting to them as well as to our other customers.

In such a varied and talented team in Network Management we have the opportunity to work in different ways and with different organisations to make sure that even the most vulnerable of our road users are catered for.

Retiming

One example of this is our recent work with Living Streets to review 12 signalised crossings in London. After the review of the signal timings we were able to save people crossing an average 29 seconds each time. Following the retiming work, volunteers from Living Streets spoke to nearly 4,000 people using the crossings and found that most people had noticed the change and gave positive feedback. Quotes included, "Lights have changed in favour of

pedestrians", "Can now cross in one go without waiting" and "Change means not waiting for ages with three children. Speeding it up is safer." It was a great, positive experience for us to really see how we can help people with their daily lives. We've committed to working with Living Streets to identify a further 50 locations for our traffic signal timing review programme next year where we will look to specifically help pedestrians. The rest of the programme will target improvements for buses and cyclists, as it did this year.

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Our new Network Management Control Centre, which operates 24/7, now combines our Buses, Traffic and Tunnels real-time operations teams into one. Their focus is around the 'four Ps': Protection, Pedestrians, Pedal Cycles and Passengers. ▶





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Some of London’s Hostile Vehicle Measures

Every decision made when managing the network and incidents in real time will have these four areas at the forefront of their consideration. We make sure that during incidents or events where streets are blocked or restricted that we are making provision not just for vehicles but for everyone else as well while keeping everyone safe.

Another area of Network Management is Asset Operations, who look after all our on-street assets above ground (excluding rail). As I write, winter maintenance is a key consideration. This year we’ve been looking at how to improve our service for

cycle lanes. Traditional gritters and ploughs don’t fit on the segregated cycle superhighways so we had to come up with a new solution. To solve this we’ve just taken delivery of two purpose-built narrow body Holder C65 tractors that will allow us to treat the 22km of segregated superhighways. This means that routes will be kept clear for cyclists so they are not forced to find alternative routes during bad weather.

Hostile

Something that has become a normal sight across London are Hostile Vehicle Measures (HVM). Some of them will go unnoticed as

they are designed to blend in as part of streetscapes but the ones in some of the key locations, such as the central London bridges are more noticeable. We’ve worked with the Metropolitan Police to make sure that not only do these protect people but that they also allow people to use the bridges for both walking and cycling safely.

These are just some of the many areas where my team work every hour of every day to keep people on our network safe. We’ve got plenty more to do before we reach Vision Zero but we are definitely going in the right direction.

■ You can read more about Vision Zero on the TfL website (left): <https://tfl.gov.uk/corporate/safety-and-security/road-safety/vision-zero-for-london>

■ TfL will be represented across the agenda at Traffex 2019 at Birmingham’s NEC, 2-4 April. Keynote speaker will be Carl Eddleston, Head of Asset Operations.

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