



Demand responsive bus service trial in Ealing

Consultation Report
November 2019

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Executive summary

This document explains the processes, responses and outcomes of the consultation on our demand responsive bus service trial in Ealing

Between 19 July 2019 and 23 August 2019, we consulted on the planned service area for a 12-month trial of a demand responsive bus service in the London Borough of Ealing. We received a total of 420 responses to the consultation, of which 214 (51%) supported or strongly supported the proposed service area and 210 (50%) said that would be interested in using the service as part of the trial. There were 203 people who said No they would not use the service (21%) or that they were not sure (28%) whether they would use the service. The main themes are highlighted below, with detailed analysis on p10.

Summary of issues raised during consultation

- Of those who said they were interested in using the trial service, convenience of booking the service and availability of vehicle arrival time were the most commonly selected reasons for their interest
- Key comments on the service area included the trial area either covering too small or limited area or not covering areas that the respondent wanted to travel
- Of those who weren't interested in using the service, the most commonly selected reasons were the fares being higher than regular buses, and fares not being integrated with the Oyster card

Next steps

Following consultation we have decided to proceed in line with the proposals with no amendments.

The trial service will launch on 13 November 2019 and run for 12 months.

Concerns and comments raised in this consultation about the service area and about how the trial is proposed to work confirm the need for more information for customers on how the service will run, and the importance of this research trial in collecting feedback from users and non-users throughout the whole 12 months.

TfL will use feedback and suggestions collected by this consultation to finalise the customer information for the trial. The consultation results will also be incorporated into wider feedback collected through the full 12 months and reported by TfL in the final outcomes after conclusion of both of the demand responsive bus trials.

1. About the proposals

1.1 Introduction

Transport for London (TfL) believes demand responsive bus services may have the potential to complement the established bus network, to contribute to sustainable travel and reduce car dependency in the future.

Demand responsive services operate flexibly in response to local demand. These services can change routing and scheduling depending on when and where customers want to travel. This has the potential to increase the use of and attract new users to public transport.

The exploration of these services is a commitment in the Mayor's Transport Strategy under policy number 23 in chapter six (proposal 104). We want to explore whether these services can improve public transport while improving accessibility and air quality (by reducing car use) in an area of outer London where car dependency is high and other forms of public transport have limited availability. To achieve this, we are delivering a small-scale 12-month research trial in the London Borough of Ealing. This trial would operate in addition to the existing local transport network.

We are committed to delivering a trial in Ealing. This consultation sought to aid in the planning and delivery of this Ealing service by:

- Understanding the level of interest for this type of service
- Understanding any concerns or objections to the details of the proposed service area
- Identifying any issues not yet already considered in delivering this trial

1.2 Procurement of the research trial

From May to November 2018, we undertook a competitive procurement process to secure an operator and identify the location for the trial, engaging a number of stakeholders through the process to ensure core requirements would be met. Operators bidding through the procurement process had to meet strict criteria in proposing a service area for the trial including:

- Must be in an outer London borough that identified themselves in scope for the trial, where car dependency is high and public transport accessibility levels are low

- Must complement, (and not compete with) existing public transport and demonstrate demand from car users
- Must be specifically supported by the boroughs covered

We awarded two 12month contracts as a result of this procurement process. The first contract was awarded to ViaVan and Go Ahead who launched the 'GoSutton' demand responsive bus trial in May 2019. The second contract, and the focus of this consultation, was awarded to bus operator RATP who will operate in partnership with MOIA as their technology provider. Their service proposal differs compared to the first trial, in its customer experience offering, operational characteristics and service area. The two trials together will better enable TfL's understanding of its demand responsive bus research objectives.

The proposed service launch area for this second trial covers a large part of the London Borough of Ealing with the potential to expand to cover more of the borough and a small part of the London Borough of Brent. Both boroughs have been engaged in the process and are supportive of the trial.

1.3 Overview of the research trial

This is a trial service that does not have a fixed route or schedule, but responds to the request to be picked up by the customer. It can be booked at the desired time of travel, primarily through an app (although a phone booking service will also be available), and provides real time updates to customers of vehicle arrival time and guarantees a seat for confirmed bookings.

The aim of the research trial is to test the impact of a flexible route and schedule and a technology-based booking system to see if this can improve public transport outcomes while also improving accessibility and reducing car dependency. The key target markets for the service are those who usually use their car and who are not, for various reasons, using conventional public transport, walking or cycling. In the area identified, the service will provide access to key destinations and trip attractors within the local area, such as healthcare, education, leisure and worship facilities.

2. About the consultation

2.1 Purpose

This consultation sought to aid in the planning and delivery of this trial service by:

- Understanding the level of interest for this type of service
- Understanding any concerns or objections to the details of the proposed service area
- Identifying any issues not yet already considered in delivering this trial

2.2 Potential outcomes

The potential outcomes of the consultation were:

- Following careful consideration of the consultation responses, we decide to proceed with the scheme as set out in the consultation
- Following careful consideration of the consultation responses, we modify the proposals in response to issues raised and proceed with a revised scheme

Our conclusion and next steps are set out in Chapter 4.

2.3 Who we consulted

We consulted key affected stakeholders including ward councillors, Members of Parliament and Assembly Members, local National Health Service (NHS) care commissioning groups, schools, business improvement districts and accessibility groups. We also consulted potential users via our database of those who have registered locally for TfL updates and information. A list of the stakeholders contacts can be found in Appendix A.

2.5 Dates and duration

The consultation ran for five weeks between 19 July and 23 August 2019. It should be noted that as a research trial, collecting feedback from users as well as other groups, such as non-users, will continue throughout the 12-month trial.

2.6 What we asked

We asked six closed questions asking if people would use the service, what would attract them to it or put them off, how they would prefer to access the service and what they thought about the specific service area. We also asked two open questions for any further comments relating to the selected service area, operating hours or stopping points, and any other comments or concerns they may have about the proposed 12-month trial.

Further information on the questions is covered in section 3.

2.7 Methods of responding

We asked respondees to answer either online, by email, in writing or by phone.

2.8 Consultation materials and publicity

The consultation was run online via our consultation portal. We sent the link to the online consultation in an email (see Appendix B) to stakeholders and everyone within or close to the service area postcodes who has registered to receive updates from TfL.

2.8.1 Press and media activity

We sent out a press release to announce the consultation launch date.

2.8.2 Meetings with stakeholders

We met with the London Borough of Ealing and relevant officials prior to the launch of the consultation. We also engaged informally at officer level during the whole planning process.

2.9 Equalities Assessment

2.9.1 Findings of the Equalities Assessment

We expect the service to have a number of benefits, such as:

- The addition of these services in areas of outer London where conventional forms of transport are less viable may improve accessibility to jobs and essential services
- The design of this type of service could act positively on perceived personal safety and security
- The provision of a guaranteed seat for customers who have booked a trip could increase accessibility of public transport
- An additional level of comfort, including the use of on-board USB charging points, could improve the customer experience
- A denser network of optional stops (approximately every 200m) which could mean shorter walking distances for some passengers
- The service will be wheelchair-accessible, with the added security of booking that space prior to travel

Some potential impacts could include:

- The plan for booking and payment of trips means all users will require a bank account (except holders of Freedom Passes and English National Concessional Travel Scheme passes)
- Those without a mobile phone or smart phone will not be able to benefit from real time updates of the service
- Some customers may find the need to book the service (rather than hail it like other London bus services) difficult to get used to

- Journeys cannot be pre-booked and can only be booked in real time at the time of travel
- The service will not be available to unaccompanied children under the age of 13

2.9.2 Measures taken to encourage participation by protected groups

We conducted stakeholder analysis to ensure we contacted locally affected groups and gave them the opportunity to respond to this consultation.

As the trial launches, it will be important that we continue to include participation by protected groups both as users of the service, and in providing feedback for research purposes.

We have met with stakeholders representing protected groups throughout the procurement of this trial, and will continue to meet with them to collect feedback throughout the full 12-months of the trial.

It will be important not only to understand the views of users but the views of non-users so that we can determine what the barriers to use are.

2.10 Analysis of consultation responses

Responses were reviewed by our in-house Consultation Analysts. A draft coding framework was developed for responses to the consultation questions, which was finalised following review by an internal expert. Responses received by letter or email were coded using the same framework.

3. Summary of all consultation responses

We received 420 responses to the consultation.

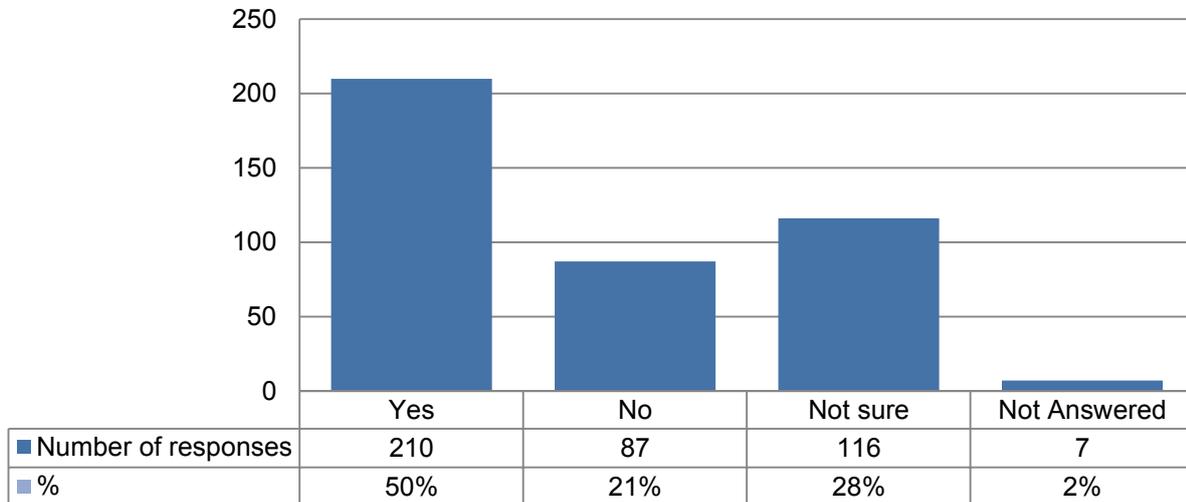
3.1 Summary of responses of all questions

3.1.1 Question 1 - What mode of transport do you currently use?

What modes of transport do you currently use most? (Please tick all that apply)	
Tube	325
Bus	323
Walking	238
Private car	191
Rail	183
Private hire vehicle	61
Cycling	73
Black cab	35
Other (please specify)	9
Motorbike	4
Dial-a-Ride or equivalent community service	1
Total	1443

3.1.2 Question 2 – Would you be interested in using this service during the 12 month trial?

Would you be interested in using this service during the 12 month trial period?



3.1.3 Question 3 – If yes, what about this service attracts you? (tick all relevant)

If yes, what about this service attracts you? (Please tick all that apply).	Number of responses
App-based booking - convenient	155
Convenient booking	150
Availability of vehicle arrival time	149
Short walking distance to stopping points	133
Includes key destinations I need to travel to	132
Guaranteed seat for those who have confirmed a booking	121
App-based booking - no need to talk to anyone	89
Pre-registered payment - no need for card or cash	82
Freedom pass/ENCTS concession	69
Size of the vehicle - fewer passengers	67
Ride comfort	61

Amenities on board (e.g. Wifi and USB charging)	52
Other (please specify)	23
Wheelchair accessible	13

3.1.4 Question 4 – If no or not sure, it is important we understand what may put you off using this service (pick any of the following – should allow for multiple options)

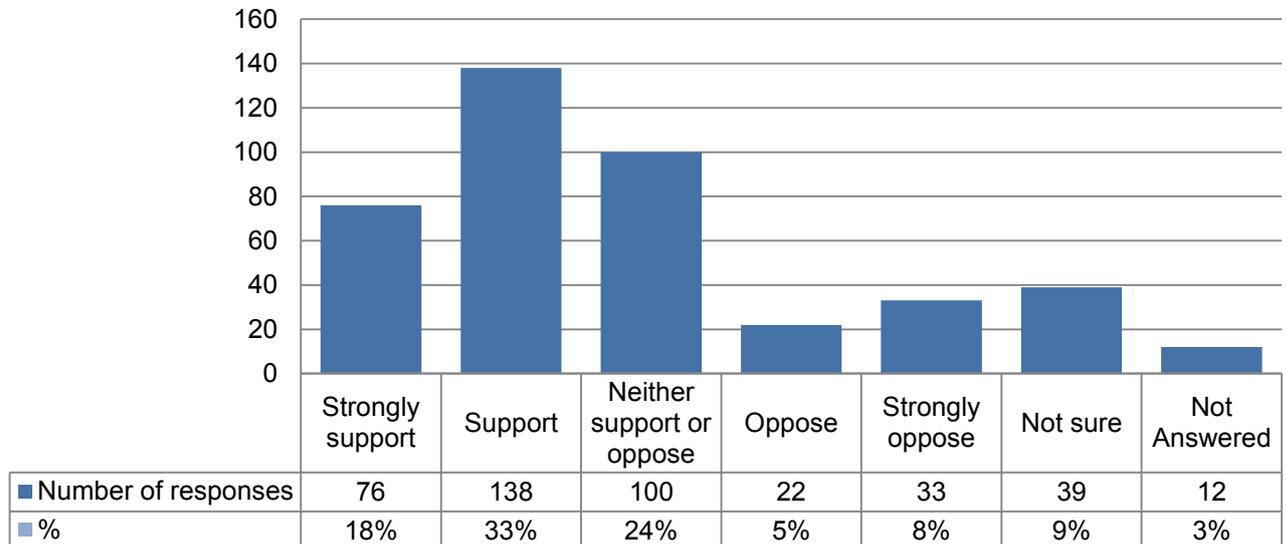
If no or not sure, it's important we understand what may put you off using the trial service.	Number of responses
Fare being higher than bus	144
Fare not integrated with Oyster	136
Service area not where I want to travel	67
I want to see how it operates first	62
Other (please specify)	44
Don't understand where I'd find the stops	41
I need more information	40
I don't understand how it works	23
Booking process too complicated	21
Size of the vehicle - too few/too many passengers	20
Not available to unaccompanied children	15
No access to smartphone	14
No SMS enabled phone	3

3.1.5 Question 5 – If yes, how would you prefer to access this service?

If yes, how would you prefer to access this service?	Number of Responses	%
App via smartphone	262	62%
Booking via phone and operator	19	5%
Not answered	139	33%

3.1.6 Question 6 – What do you think about our choice of specific service area and the destinations included for this trial?

What do you think about our choice of specific service area and the destinations included for this trial?



3.1.7 Issues commonly raised

Of the 420 people who responded to this consultation, 341 provided a comment in the open text boxes for the scheme. The most frequent are summarised below based on whether respondents had indicated if they would use the service, wouldn't use the service or were unsure.

For the question which asked for comments on the service area, operating hours and stopping points. Of the 210 (50 per cent) who indicated they would use the service, 15 (7 per cent) were generally positive about the proposal and 187 didn't leave any comment. Of the 87 (21 per cent) who indicated they wouldn't use the service, 73 (21 per cent) said that the area the trial covers was too small or limited or didn't cover the area the respondent wanted to travel. Of the 116 respondents (28 per cent) who were unsure of whether they would use the service, 16 (14 per cent) were generally negative about the proposal.

For the question that asked for other concerns or issues about the service: 75 (22 per cent) had a partially negative view about the proposal. 36 (11 per cent) had questions around the operation, 24 (7 per cent) said that the proposal would cause congestion and/or increase pollution in the area, 23 (7 per cent) said that they would keep using the existing bus network as it currently meets passenger needs, and 19 (6 per cent) didn't agree with the costs of the service.

3.3 Summary of stakeholder responses

This section provides summaries of the feedback we received from stakeholder groups that responded to the consultation. We have condensed detailed responses.

Local authorities & statutory bodies

London Borough of Ealing

The London Borough of Ealing is very supportive of the proposal. They will work with TfL, RAPT Dev and MOIA to monitor and if necessary improve the scheme as demand and usage is better understood.

London TravelWatch

London Travel Watch would like to include the following areas in the launch service area:

- Greenford - Haslemere Road and Dolphin Road to the west of Kensington Road
- Southall Green - The area bounded by Western Road, Montagu Waye and Norwood Road in the north and the borough border/Grand Union Canal in the south
- Osterley Park - Wolsey Close just south of the junction of Tentelow Lane and Windmill Lane

They asked that if we were going to introduce a phone booking service it should have sufficient hours of phone operator availability to ensure that passengers without smartphones can use the demand responsive bus

They would also like to see any general learning from the GoSutton bus trial included in the delivery of the trial in Ealing.

Transport for London Youth Panel

The Panel supports the proposed trial of a demand responsive service in Ealing and believes this will enable TfL to test future mobility solutions. They are concerned that the growth in PHVs through ride-sharing and app-based services risk undermining TfL's services in the future, and TfL's ability to provide/fund/run a unified city-wide service. Attempts to trial new demand-responsive services are therefore welcomed. Young people are susceptible to using on-demand services.

The Panel recognises the proposed area, as well as the extended 'could be served' area, and believes trialling with a larger area will provide better scale benefits, and possibly higher usage, particularly given the inclusion of more tube/overground stops, and this will resultantly provide better data.

Whilst the panel recognises the difficulty in integrating with existing payment schemes, it recognises that most demand-based services already require app-based

payments and as such does not believe this will be a significant disincentive to usage. The Panel believes there is an opportunity for discounted rates on the service for young people as £3.50 is viewed as steep compared to existing offerings for this age group, e.g. existing Oyster concessions, and that this could be verified through simply showing an existing discounted oyster to the driver of the service upon boarding.

Transport and road user groups

Licensed Taxi Drivers Association (LTDA)

The LTDA note that because the trial is providing services that are very similar to local taxi services, the trial should take full account of any effects on those local Taxi services.

The LTDA also noted that this trial could impact users of the London Taxicard scheme as it may reduce the number of taxi operators in areas that would be covered by the demand responsive bus service

Potters bar and St. Albans bus user group

They note that the service needs to be flexible or people won't use it. They also question whether the proposed bus changes for the Elizabeth line may change travel patterns in west London.

Park Royal Business Group (PRBG)

PRBG strongly supports the development & improvement of affordable bus networks that connect Park Royal with the wider transport system and encourage modal shift. They would welcome the inclusion of Park Royal in the trial and would work with TfL and partners to promote the opportunity to Park Royal businesses. They would like to see some changes to the boundary of the trial, so that the service area includes the following areas

- Abbey Industrial Estate to south of Stonebridge Park station
- Victoria Industrial Estate to east of North Acton station

They consider both of these estates to be within Park Royal and believe they would benefit from more transport options for workers. They would also encourage consideration to shift workers in Park Royal arriving and departing on night shifts.

Anterides Ltd

Anterides Ltd outline their support for this service.

However, they explain that people who currently buy a weekly or monthly travel pass are unlikely to pay for the additional service.

They also queried the space availability for wheelchair users as well as those with pushchairs and heavy luggage.

4. Next steps

Following consultation we have decided to proceed in line with the proposals with no amendments.

The trial service will launch on 12 November 2019 and run for 12 months.

Concerns and comments raised in this consultation about the service area and about how the trial is proposed to work confirm the need for more information for customers on how the service will run, and the importance of this research trial in collecting feedback from users and non-users throughout the whole 12 months.

TfL will use feedback and suggestions collected by this consultation to finalise the customer information for the trial. The consultation results will also be incorporated into wider feedback collected through the full 12 months and reported by TfL in the final outcomes after conclusion of both of the demand responsive bus trials.

Appendix A: Stakeholder list

Boroughs

London Borough of Ealing
London Borough of Brent

Political organisations

Greater London Authority
London Councils
Members of parliament
London Assembly members
All affected ward councillors
CBI

Unions

GBM Drivers
Unite the Union
Unions Together

Accessibility Groups

Access in London
Action on Hearing Loss
Action on Hearing Loss (RNID)
Action on Disability and Work UK
Anxiety UK
Age UK London
Action on Disability
Age UK
Age Concern London
Alzheimer's Society
Asian Peoples Disabilities Alliance
British Dyslexia Association
Campaign for Better Transport
Carers Information Service
Croydon Accessible Transport (CAT)
Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee
Disability Rights UK
Disability Rights UK
Dogs for Good
Greater London Forum for Older People
Hearing Dogs UK
Independent Disability Advisory Group

Joint Committee on Mobility of Blind and Partially Sighted People (JCMBPS)
Joint Committee on Mobility for Disabled People (JCMD)
London Older People's Strategy Group
MS Society
MIND
National Autistic Society
Organisation of Blind Afro Caribbeans (OBAC)
Pan-London Dementia Alliance
Royal London Society for Blind People
Stroke Association
Sutton Centre for Voluntary Sector
Strategic Access Panel
The British Dyslexia Association
The Association of Guide Dogs for the Blind
Transport Focus
Transport for All

Emergency Services

London Ambulance Service
Metropolitan Police
London Fire Brigade

Transport organisations/user groups

AA
Association of Car Fleet Operators
Association of British Drivers
British Cycling
British Motorcycle Federation
Chauffeur and Executive Association
Computer Cab
Confederation of Passenger transport
Department for Transport
Dial-a-Cab
Driver & Vehicle Licensing Agency (DVLA)
Friends of Capital Transport
Sutton Rail Users' Forum
Sutton Community Transport
Living Streets – Sutton
Living Streets
London Cycling Campaign (Croydon)
London TravelWatch
London Suburban Taxi-drivers' Coalition
Licenced Taxi Drivers Association
London Omnibus Traction Society

Motorcycle Action Group
Motorcycle Industry Association
National Express Ltd
Rail Delivery Group
RAC Motoring Foundation
Sustrans
South West Rail
The Driver-Guides Association

Cycling groups

All Party Parliamentary Cycling Group
Borough Cycling Officers Group
Cycling Embassy of Great Britain
London Cycling Campaign

Freight Organisations

Asda
Association of International & Express Couriers
Argos
Brewery Logistics Group
British Beer & Pub Association (BBPA)
CitySprint
Chartered Institute of Logistics and Transport (CILT)
Coop
DHL
Freight Transport Association
Federation of Wholesale Distributors (FWD)
Royal Mail
Road Haulage Association
Sainsbury's Supermarkets
TK Maxx
Uber

Utilities

BT
EDF Energy
National Grid
Thames water

Others

Friends of the Earth
MI6

Appendix B: Stakeholder email

Home Plan journey Status update About



TRANSPORT FOR LONDON 

Dear Sam,
We are launching a four week consultation on plans to trial a demand responsive bus service in Ealing. Our [public consultation](#) will run until 18 August.
Though we are committed to delivering a trial in Ealing, our consultation seeks to:

- Understand level of interest for this type of service
- Understand any concerns or objections to the details of the proposed service area
- Identify any issues not yet already considered in delivery of this trial

This area has been chosen because car use is higher and the area is more difficult to serve with conventional public transport.
The research trial, which will last for a year, is being delivered in parallel with the [GO Sutton research trial](#), to help TfL understand the potential for demand responsive bus services to complement the existing bus network to reduce car dependency and contribute to sustainable travel in London

Yours sincerely,



Claire Mann
Director of Bus Operations

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