

# Consultation on the proposed withdrawal of the heritage bus service on route 9

Consultation Report  
May 2014

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# 1 Introduction

We recently consulted stakeholders and the public about the proposed withdrawal of the heritage service on bus route 9. The consultation ran from 23 January 2014 to 7 March 2014.

Route 9 operates between Hammersmith and Aldwych approximately every 6 minutes Monday to Saturday daytimes and every 10 minutes during the evenings and on Sundays.

The heritage service operates between Kensington High Street and Trafalgar Square using Routemaster buses. These buses run daily, every 20 minutes, between 0930 and 1830.

We have proposed to withdraw the heritage service on route 9 because usage is limited and relatively expensive to operate.

This report contains details of the consultation and summarises the responses we received.

We have also produced a separate document that specifically deals with issues raised to this proposal.

## 2 The consultation

The consultation was designed to enable us to understand stakeholder and public opinion about our proposed changes to route 9.

The potential outcomes of the consultation are:

- We decide the consultation raises no issues that should prevent us from proceeding with the scheme as originally planned.
- We modify the scheme in response to issues raised in consultation
- We abandon the scheme as a result of issues raised in the consultation.

### 2.1 Consultation objectives

The objectives of the consultation were:

- To give stakeholders and the public easily-understandable information about the proposals and allow them to respond
- To understand the level of support or opposition for the change
- To understand any issues that might affect the proposal of which we were not previously aware
- To understand concerns and objections
- To allow respondents to make suggestions.

### 2.2 Who we consulted

The consultation intended to seek the views of the general public and stakeholders which included Hammersmith & Fulham, Kensington & Chelsea, and Westminster councils, London TravelWatch, Members of Parliament, Assembly Members, interest groups and associations. A list of the stakeholders we consulted is shown in Appendix B and their responses are outlined in Section 4.

### 2.3 Consultation material, distribution and publicity

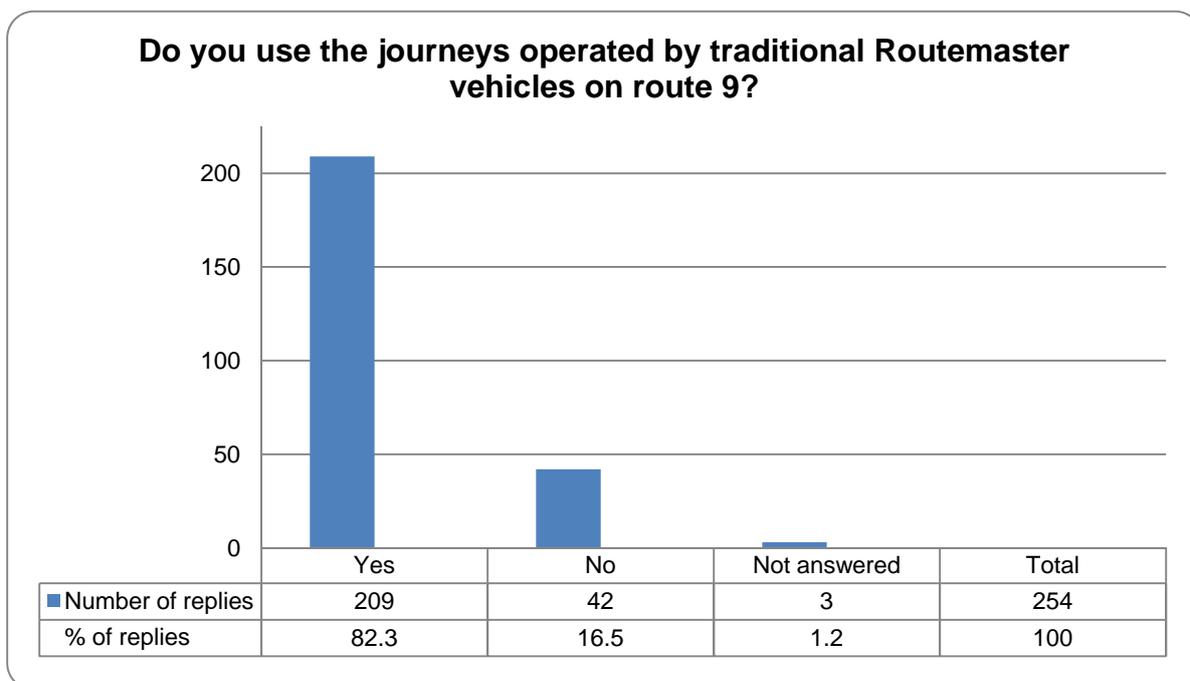
We published details of the consultation on our website and advised stakeholders of the link via email. The online questionnaire consisted of five general questions and two specific questions, and we also provided free text areas for further comments.

## 3 Responses from members of the public

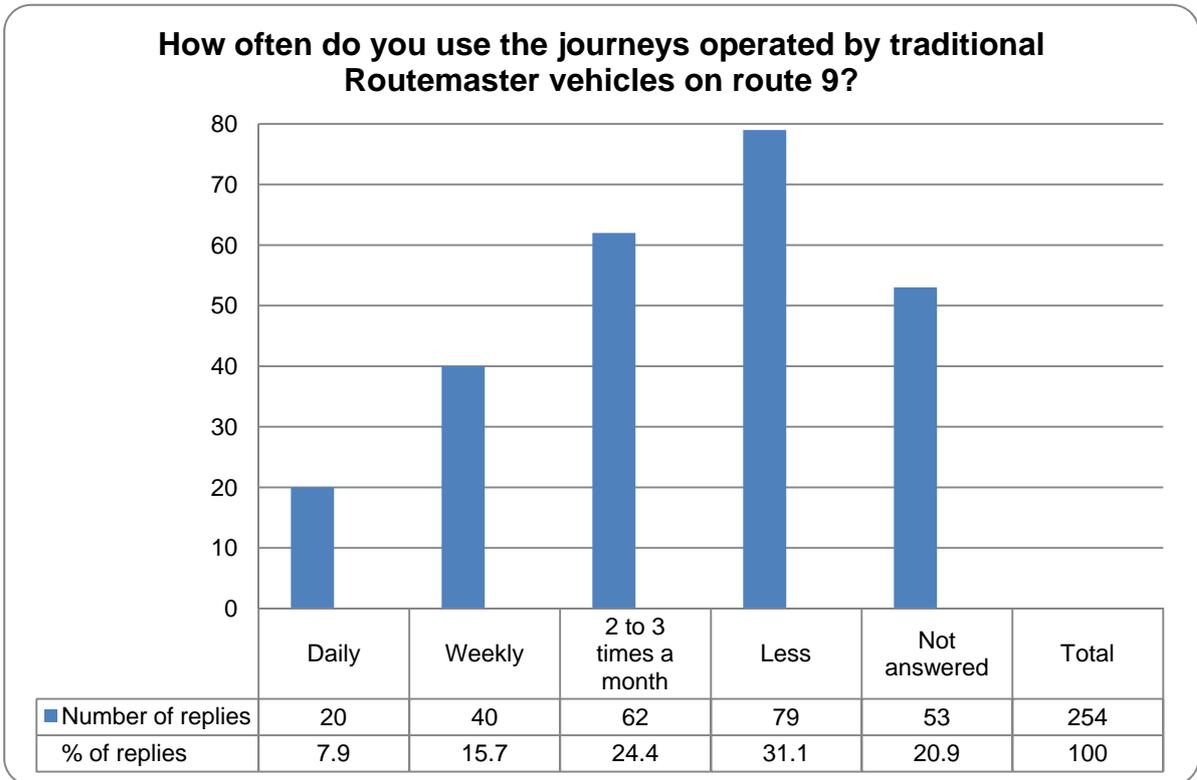
There were 254 responses from members of the public. 252 were online, one was via email and we received one letter. Three online responses were identified as duplicates and have not been included.

### 3.1 Public consultation results

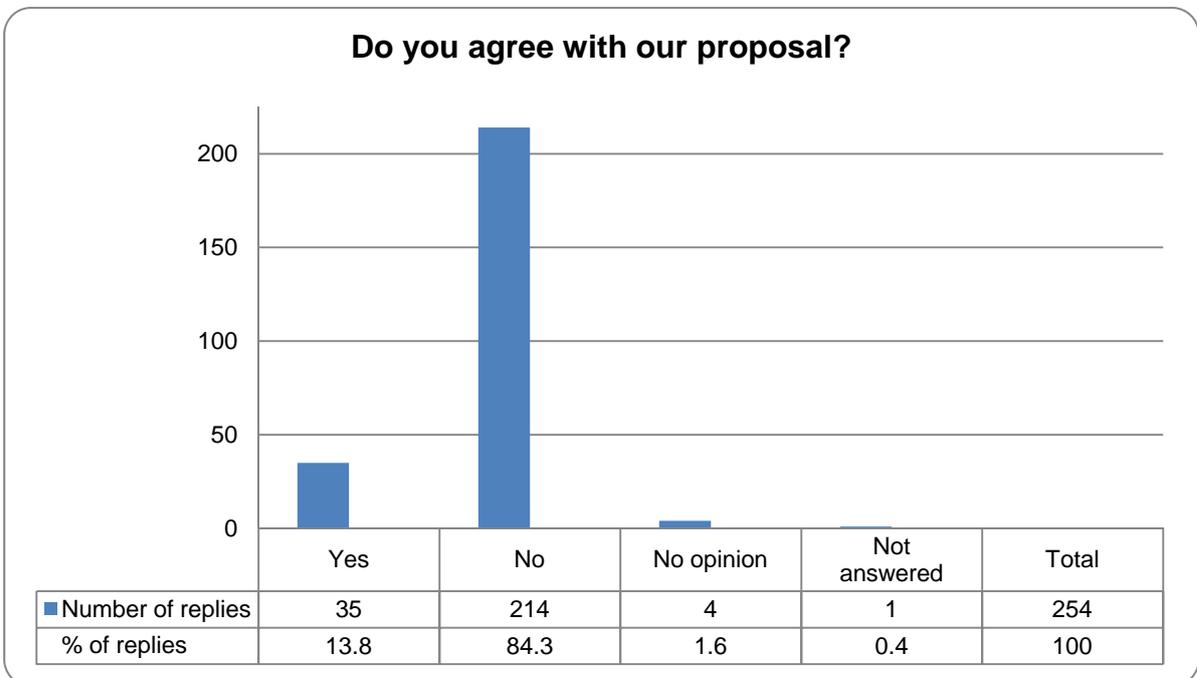
**Q1. Do you use the journeys on route 9 between Kensington High Street and Trafalgar Square operated by traditional Routemaster vehicles?**



**Q2. How often do you use the journeys on route 9 between Kensington High Street and Trafalgar Square operated by traditional Routemaster vehicles?**



**Q3. Do you agree with our proposal?**



**Q4. If Yes, please let us know why**

The table below is a summary of the additional comments we received to the above open question.

| <b>Comments and suggestions</b>                                  | <b>Number of times comment mentioned</b> |
|--|--|
| They have had their time / the New Routemaster has replaced them | 10                                       |
| Spend the money on other parts of the network                    | 6  |
| Withdraw them if they are not busy                               | 4  |
| Not environment friendly / not accessible                        | 4  |
| They are expensive to run  | 2  |
| Transfer them to route 15  | 1  |
| As long as you replace them with the New Routemasters            | 1  |

**Q5. If No, please let us know why**

The table below is a summary of the additional comments we received to the above open question.

| <b>Comments and suggestions</b>  | <b>Number of times comment mentioned</b> |
|--|--|
| These buses are part of our heritage   | 98                                       |
| They are iconic  | 97                                       |
| This is a popular tourist attraction   | 94                                       |
| The traditional Routemaster is better (e.g. more comfortable, ease of hopping on and off) than the new one.                  | 36                                       |
| Keep this valuable service   | 31                                       |
| Transfer these buses to another route  | 30                                       |
| Find savings elsewhere   | 31                                       |
| Run a reduced service, e.g. at weekends only   | 18                                       |
| It is great to see the old and new buses running on one route at the same time   | 5  |
| Reroute the service  | 5  |
| Run a heritage sightseeing service with these buses  | 5  |
| These buses are an advert for TfL and London   | 4  |
| Can you not find someone to sponsor or subsidise this service / perhaps volunteers could run this service                    | 4  |
| These buses provide extra capacity to the overcrowded normal 9 route / when used by tourists they free up the normal service | 4  |
| Most people think these buses are private hire and that's why they don't use them  | 3  |
| These buses provide character to London  | 3  |
| With regards to accessibility there are enough other low floor buses on this route to accommodate all                        | 3  |

|   |   |
|---|---|
| With regards to accessibility there are enough other low floor buses on this route to accommodate all | 3 |
| Low usage because they are poorly run / don't run on the whole route / make them more efficient       | 3 |
| Consultation is a waste of time your decision is already made   | 2 |
| How can you do this in the 'Year of the Bus'?   | 2 |
| Merge the heritage services on route 9 and 15   | 2 |
| This route is routed in such a way to ensure low patronage  | 2 |
| Renumber this service so it is different from the regular service                                     | 1 |
| This is a tourism issue and not a transport planning one  | 1 |
| Transfer these buses to the 15 Heritage route to increase frequency on that tourist route             | 1 |

#### **Q6. Do you have any further comments about these proposals?**

The table below is a summary of the additional comments we received to the above open question.

| <b>Comments and suggestions</b>   | <b>Number of times comment mentioned</b> |
|---|--|
| Transfer the service to another route.  | 13                                       |
| Keep them / don't withdraw them   | 12                                       |
| Find savings elsewhere  | 8  |
| Run these buses as tourist only route between Tower Hill and High Street Kensington       | 7  |
| Publicise these heritage services   | 2  |
| Concerns about consultation: poorly publicised, box-ticking etc.                          | 3  |
| Extend the heritage 9 route to terminate at the same places as the regular route          | 2  |
| Run a reduced service, e.g. at weekends only  | 2  |
| Transfer these buses to the 15 Heritage route to increase frequency on that tourist route | 3  |
| Separate these buses from the main network and charge more                                | 2  |
| There must be no change to the frequency of the regular route                             | 2  |
| There should be no reduction of these buses   | 1  |
| Shorten the service but make it more frequent/intensive                                   | 1  |
| Restore the buses more  | 1  |
| Use the buses outside of central London on strong networks                                | 1  |

## 4 Responses from statutory bodies and other stakeholders

We received three responses from stakeholders. Their responses are included below:

### **Councillor Tim Coleridge – Cabinet Member for Planning Policy, Transport and the Arts – Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea**

We are disappointed to hear that TfL are considering withdrawing the 9H bus route as the Council was successful in requesting that this service was extended into the borough in 2011. The route takes in a number of important tourist destinations in London such as Kensington High Street, Linley Sambourne House, Kensington Palace, Exhibition Road, Hyde Park, The Royal Albert Hall, Knightsbridge and the West End. Although we also welcome the New Bus for London buses, we believe that both buses have their own distinctive design features and it would be disappointing if we couldn't continue to have both buses operating in London.

We appreciate that this proposal is driven by the fact that the service is expensive to operate and has limited usage. However, have you considered reducing the frequency of the service to deliver the savings required? We believe there is still a demand for this route, however perhaps the service could be reduced to two buses per hour. We also wondered if you would consider sponsoring the route out to a company in much the same way as the Cable Car across the River Thames is sponsored by Emirates Airlines.

We are interested to know if the 9H has fewer passengers than the 15H, as this route has been identified first for closure. If the 9H has a similar level of patronage to the 15H, can you please explain why this route has been chosen first for review?

We understand that Government regulations mean that all buses that accept fare paying passengers have to be wheelchair accessible by 2017 however exemptions may be sought from the Secretary of State for Transport. I would be grateful if you would please let me know whether such an exemption has been sought for the two bus routes in London which run the traditional Routemasters, the number 15H and the 9H? If the routes could be granted an exemption, we would encourage TfL to consider ways to keep these buses in operation.

### **Hugh Brennan – Principal Transport Planner – Westminster City Council**

It is requested that the frequency of the main [route 9] remains high.

### **Andy Slaughter – Member of Parliament – London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham**

The Routemaster bus is one of the most famous forms of transport in the world, and it is one of the most recognisable icons of London. The number 9 heritage route provides a great opportunity for tourists and visitors to take a journey on a Routemaster for the price of a normal bus journey.

It would be a huge shame to withdraw this service. This service is never going to be profitable; it is not going to be a key part of TfL's transport network. That is not its purpose. It is part of London's history and heritage. They are beautiful vehicles and should be allowed to continue taking passengers through some of the most famous parts of London.

# Appendix A – Online material

## Bus service proposal: route 9

### Overview

The London bus network is kept under regular review. As part of this, we develop proposals for changes to services.

### Why We Are Consulting

We are proposing to withdraw the journeys on route 9 that operate with traditional Routemaster buses and would like to hear your views.

#### Bus Route 9 - Hammersmith to Aldwych

Route 9 operates between Hammersmith and Aldwych broadly at the following frequencies

- Monday to Saturday daytimes – Every 6 minutes (5 minutes at peak times)
- Evenings and Sundays – Every 10 minutes

In addition, there are journeys that operate between Kensington High Street and Trafalgar Square using traditional Routemaster buses. Buses run every 20 minutes between approximately 0930 and 1830 daily and serve a number of tourist attractions.

Usage on this additional service is limited and relatively expensive to operate.

We are therefore proposing to withdraw the journeys on route 9 operated by traditional Routemaster buses in July 2014.

The fully accessible New Routemaster buses were introduced on the main service on route 9 in October 2013, on which there is spare capacity to absorb those passengers currently using the journeys between Kensington High Street and Trafalgar Square.

Traditional Routemaster buses will continue to operate on route 15 between Trafalgar Square and the Tower of London.

#### Have your say

Please give us your views by completing the online consultation form by **7 March 2014**.

This consultation is part of the process which fulfils the requirement for TfL to consult under Section 183 of the Greater London Authority Act 1999.

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### Share This Consultation



## Appendix B – List of stakeholders consulted

|                    |
|--------------------|
| London TravelWatch |
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|                        |
|------------------------|
| <b>Elected Members</b> |
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|                     |
|---------------------|
| Andrew Slaughter MP |
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|             |
|-------------|
| Andrew Boff |
|-------------|

|                  |
|------------------|
| Caroline Pidgeon |
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|                   |
|-------------------|
| Darren Johnson AM |
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|                |
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| Fiona Twycross |
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|                 |
|-----------------|
| Gareth Bacon AM |
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|               |
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| Greg Hands MP |
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|                |
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| Jenny Jones AM |
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|               |
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| Karen Buck MP |
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| Kit Malthouse AM |
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|                    |
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| Malcolm Rifkind MP |
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|               |
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| Mark Field MP |
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| Murad Qureshi AM |
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|                 |
|-----------------|
| Nicky Gavron AM |
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|                |
|----------------|
| Stephen Knight |
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|            |
|------------|
| Tom Copley |
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|                  |
|------------------|
| Victoria Borwick |
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| <b>Local Authorities</b> |
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| Royal Borough of Kensington and Chelsea |
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| London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham |
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| City of Westminster |
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| <b>Police &amp; Health Authorities</b> |
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| Metropolitan Police |
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| London Fire and Emergency Planning Authority |
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| London Ambulance Service |
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| <b>Transport Groups</b> |
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| London Cycling Campaign (Hammersmith and Fulham) |
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| AA Motoring Trust |
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| Association of British Drivers |
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| Association of Car Fleet Operators |
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| British Motorcyclists Federation |
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| Campaign for Better Transport |
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| CTC, the national cycling charity |
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| Freight Transport Association |
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| London Cycling Campaign (Kensington and Chelsea) |
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| London Cycling Campaign (Westminster) |
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| Motorcycle Action Group |
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| Motorcycle Industry Association |
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| Road Haulage Association |
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|                             |
|-----------------------------|
| The Routemaster Association |
|-----------------------------|

| <b>Other Stakeholders</b>  |  |
|--|--|
| Hammersmith & Fulham Action on Disability                                  | London Older People's Strategy Group                     |
| Action Disability Kensington & Chelsea                                     | London Underground                                       |
| Action on Hearing Loss (formerly RNID)                                     | MIND   |
| Age Concern London   | National Children's Bureau                               |
| Age UK   | National Grid  |
| Asian Peoples Disabilities Alliance  | Neighbourcare St John's Wood & Maida Vale                |
| Bayswater Residents Association  | New West End Company                                     |
| BBC  | Paddington Residents Active Concern On Transport (PRACT) |
| Belgravia Residents Association  | Port of London Authority                                 |
| BT   | RADAR London Access Forum                                |
| Chelsea Society  | Residents Society of Mayfair and St James's              |
| Confederation of British Industry (CBI)                                    | RNIB   |
| Disability Alliance  | Royal Mail   |
| Disabled Persons Transport Advisory Committee                              | Royal Parks  |
| EDF Energy   | Sense  |
| Fitzrovia Neighbourhood Association  | Sixty Plus   |
| Green Flag Group   | Soho Society   |
| Guide Dogs for the Blind Association                                       | South East Bayswater Residents Association               |
| Hammersmith & Fulham Safer Transport Team                                  | St Helen's Residents' Association                        |
| Harrowby and District Residents Association                                | St John's Wood Society                                   |
| Heart of London Business Alliance  | Stroke Association                                       |
| In & Around Covent Garden  | Thames Water   |
| In Holborn   | The British Dyslexia Association                         |
| Joint Committee on Mobility of Blind and Partially Sighted People (JCMBPS) | Thorney Island Society                                   |
| Joint Mobility Unit  | VisitBritain   |
| Kensington & Chelsea Safer Transport Team                                  | VisitLondon  |
| Living Streets   | Westminster Safer Transport Team                         |
| London Councils  |  |