

Smoothing traffic flow

The majority of journeys in the Capital are made on the roads and footways. Even Tube and rail journeys rely on the roads to get their passengers to and from the station, so if the roads don't work well, London will falter as the economic engine of the UK.

Demand on our roads is set to increase. This demand will arise before the completion of the major rail scheme, Crossrail, and the enhancements to the Underground network. Both of these projects will provide extra capacity on public transport.

Any changes made to the road network have to take into account existing high demand and the need to achieve a balance between competing users.

The following key facts give an idea of the demands being placed on London's roads.

London's population growth

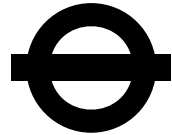
2006	7.51 million
2016	7.96 – 8.14 million
2026	8.27 – 8.61 million

(Estimated population figures)

London's economic and employment growth

1998 – 2008	Average economic growth 3.1 per cent a year (2.4 per cent for the rest of the UK)	
	Average employment growth 1.2 per cent a year (0.9 per cent in the rest of the UK)	
2009 – 2026	Expected jobs growth	
	Central London	26 per cent
	Inner London	27 per cent
	Outer London	11 per cent

(Notwithstanding the current global economic downturn, all parts of London are expected to see jobs growth over the next 17 years.)



Pressure on the road network

Vehicle kilometres

The total number of kilometres travelled by vehicles in London has increased from 31.5 billion in 1996 to 33 billion in 2006 – a five per cent increase.

Car traffic speed

Traffic speeds have been generally declining since the 1970s, due to congestion. These figures reflect speeds in the morning peak, for the period 2003 to 2006:

Central:	17.0mph
Inner:	18.2mph
Outer:	26.1mph
Average:	23.7mph

1977 – 1982 (am peak)

Central:	19.5mph
Inner:	21.8mph
Outer:	30.7mph
Average:	27.5mph

Buses

Bus passenger kilometres (a measure of patronage) have increased from 4,018 million in 1995/96 to 7,014 million in 2006/07.

Cycling

Since 1990, the number of cyclist entering the central cordon (which is roughly the same area as the Congestion Charging zone) has increased by approximately 130 per cent, with most of this growth occurring since 2000.

In the same period, there has been a 30 per cent decline in incidents in which cyclists were killed or seriously injured.

The data in this section has been drawn from a number of sources including the [Planning for a Better London report \(July 2008, Greater London Authority\)](#), and the [Transport for London publication's London Travel Report 2007](#) and the [Road Network Performance and Research Team Technical Note 3 'Total vehicle delay for London' \(April 2006\)](#).