Visitor road safety
09080
July 2010
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Research conducted by Synovate
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Executive summary
Key findings

• TfL LRSU (London Road Safety Unit) has identified tourists as being at particularly high risk of being injured as pedestrians whilst visiting London. Reasons for this include:

  • **Road regulations:** Different countries have different attitudes and conventions when it comes to crossing the road, and visitors are unlikely to adapt these when travelling abroad

  • **UK road design:** Crossing times are often underestimated, cars driving on the different side of the road

  • **The holiday mentality:** People are likely to be distracted by the scenery or sites, or consume increased levels of alcohol when they are on holiday

• There is a lack of available information on road safety, both from within the UK and other countries. Road safety is a relatively low-involvement subject, and people are therefore unlikely to actively seek out information. Most people believe they know how to cross the road safely, and there are more appealing areas worthy of investigation e.g. places of interest
Key findings

- Tourists are particularly at risk of being injured as pedestrians whilst visiting London because there are several areas of confusion which can make them more likely to place themselves in potentially dangerous situations.

- Visitors do not see any reason why they should adapt their behaviour as a pedestrian when visiting London. They behave in the same way they do at home. As a result, they are usually unfamiliar with both the written and unwritten laws of London’s roads. Key sources of confusion include:
  - **Pelican crossings**: “Do I need to press the button?”
    “How much time is left? I’ll make a run for it!”
  - **Other crossing points**: “I’m never sure whether cars have to stop or not.”
    “I’ll just copy the locals. That seems to work.”
  - **Nature of traffic**: “I keep looking the wrong way when I cross.”
    “Traffic seems to move fast here. You don’t expect it.”
Many overseas visitors routinely take risks when walking around London. Risk-taking behaviour can be divided into two categories – intentional and unintentional.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intentional risk-taking</th>
<th>Unintentional risk-taking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Deliberately taking ‘minor’ risks in order to save time/keep up with friends</td>
<td>Unwittingly putting themselves at risk through habit or lack of attention</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing half way and waiting between two lanes of traffic</td>
<td>Taking a first step into the road without looking</td>
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<td>Crossing between vehicles in a moving traffic flow</td>
<td>Herding – getting swept along with the crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing between stationary vehicles</td>
<td>Talking to friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing on red</td>
<td>Avoiding obstructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking on the other side of barriers</td>
<td>Taking photos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Intentional risk-taking behaviour is usually defined by an individual’s perception of how likely an undesired consequence is, and how serious those consequences are. Clearly the consequences of being hit by a car are undesirable for most people.
• **Intentional risk-taking** as a pedestrian is therefore more likely if people do not believe that there is a high likelihood of any undesirable consequences happening. The end result is that they perceive their behaviour as being relatively low risk. This perception can be influenced by:

  - Observing the locals jaywalking and try to copy their behaviour
  - Over-confidence in their ability as a safe pedestrian

• Another element of taking risks is the calculation as to whether the expected benefit of taking that risk outweighs any potential undesirable consequences:

  - People on a tight sightseeing schedule are likely to be in a rush and want to save time
  - People travelling in large groups often want to keep up with their friends and not be left behind

• **Unintentional risks** are taken where people do not make the connection between this behaviour and the potential for it to result in them being involved in an accident. Unintentional risks can also be taken as a result of a lack of understanding of the situation e.g. traffic is travelling in the opposite direction in the UK
Intentional and unintentional risk-taking behaviour

- **Intentional**
  - Crossing on red
  - Crossing between stationary traffic
  - Crossing between moving traffic
  - Ignoring barriers
  - Crossing halfway
  - Avoiding obstructions
  - Herding

- **Unintentional**
  - First step free
  - Talking with friends
  - Taking a photo
  - Avoiding obstructions
  - Herding

- **Low perceived risk**
- **High perceived risk**
Research background
Research background

• TfL has identified tourists as being at particularly high risk of being injured as pedestrians whilst visiting London

• The Road Safety Unit is conscious of the large number of foreign visitors that come to London each year, and in particular the large number of visitors who will be arriving in London for the Olympics in 2012.

• Synovate were asked to explore this issue in greater depth and help to identify communications messages that could be used to help increase awareness of the issue and promote greater safety
Objectives

The research objectives were as follows:

- to explore the mindset of tourists towards pedestrian road safety when they are visiting London

- to understand potential reasons for a poorer pedestrian road safety record amongst tourists who are visiting London

- to explore potential communications messages that could be used amongst these groups to promote road safety as a pedestrian

- to identify potential communications channels to deliver this message
Methodology

Synovate designed a multi-stage research methodology for this study:

- **Desk research** – looking at road safety messages and resources in the UK and three other countries: Spain, USA and China

- **Observation** – visits to seven tourist hotspots to observe pedestrian behaviour (Oxford Street, Bond Street, Piccadilly, Regent Street, Greenwich, Covent Garden, Westminster)

- **Intercept depth interviews** – five minute interviews with tourists in seven locations across London (as above)

- **Accompanied journeys** – 14 one-hour interviews with non-UK nationals who have recently moved to London
### Sample profile – accompanied journeys

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Nationality</th>
<th>Length of residency in London (months)</th>
<th>Areas covered</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Romanian</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Oxford St, Regent St, Bond St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Spanish</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Piccadilly, Covent Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Cameroonian</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Bond St, Oxford St, Regent St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Ghanaian</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Regent St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Nigerian</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>Regent St, Covent Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Canadian</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Greenwich</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Bangladeshi</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Covent Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>Westminster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>American</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>Westminster</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Polish</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>Covent Garden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Hungarian</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>Bond St, Regent St, Oxford St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>Japanese</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Piccadilly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M</td>
<td>Chinese</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>Oxford St</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>German</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>Covent Garden, Oxford St</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Context
Why tourists are more likely to be involved in incidents

Research has shown that overseas visitors to London are at greater risk of being involved in road traffic incidents compared to the resident population.

**Road regulations**
- Visitors assume traffic will come from the wrong direction
- Different countries have different conventions
- In Berlin people wait on deserted streets for the green man
- In Cairo, people stride out into oncoming traffic

**UK road design**
- Some academics argue that the UK’s roads are often designed with vehicles first:
  - Pedestrian crossing times are not generous
  - Crossings often located where there is the greatest amount of traffic

**Holiday mentality**
- People distracted by scenery/sites
- Increased alcohol consumption of ‘pleasure travellers’
- Fatigue of visitors can also have an impact. Visitors may be jet-lagged when they arrive. Busy schedules may also result in fatigue

**Road changes**
- Street clutter and barriers have been removed in certain areas – Oxford Circus, and Exhibition Road in Kensington - giving pedestrians more freedom
- Pedestrians are sharing more space with traffic than ever before
Different attitudes towards road safety

When it comes to crossing the road, there's no such thing as an international standard. Every country does it differently.…

“In Milan, traffic lights are instructions, in Rome they are suggestions, and in Naples they are decorations.”

“We stopped to let a cyclist go by but he stopped as well, took off his hat and with an expansive gesture said "After you, Ma'am". Now that's Canadian courtesy!”

“To Italians, zebra crossings are just a nice bit of art on the road!”

“The best place is in San Francisco where timed crossings are respected by both pedestrians and motorists.”

Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/7939353.stm
Different attitudes towards road safety

When it comes to crossing the road, there's no such thing as an international standard. Every country does it differently....

“A Parisienne told me NEVER to look at the traffic when crossing the road at a crossing. If they see a pedestrian has seen them they will assume that the pedestrian will stop. By “pretending” you’ve not seen the car leaves the driver thinking you’ve not seen them and they will stop.”

“In Cambodia, the trick is not to hesitate - set off from the curb and walk at a steady rate, regardless of approaching traffic.”

“..Our American colleague arrived ten minutes later than us as she could not be induced to cross against a "Don't Walk" sign at any price!”

“You should see Nairobi! Vehicles mounting pavements to cut through-people..crossing the street takes skill and sheer guts!”

Source: http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/magazine/7939353.stm
Information currently available to tourists
What advice is out there for pedestrians?

- There is very little information on pedestrian safety for people coming to London. Government websites often contain information, but this is specifically aimed at young children.

- The majority of information aimed at tourists is from non-official sources such as blogs.
  - There are many people who have visited London who have used the internet to advise fellow tourists how to be safe when walking around London.

- There is a lack of information from sources one might expect to provide pedestrian road safety advice e.g. Home Office and Foreign Office websites.
Where do people look for information?

Travel blogs based on other people’s real experiences of visiting London are the most trusted and personally relevant sources of information. They are looking for general travel information rather than anything related specifically to pedestrian safety.
UK-based information – official sources

**Information Source**
- Metropolitan Police
- VisitLondon.com
- VisitBritain.com

**Information given**
- Keep bags/cameras visible
- Don’t buy tickets from ‘touts’
- Stay in well lit areas at night
- Avoid isolated buses/trains
- Use licensed taxis
- Take care crossing roads
- The website includes a guide to ‘Walking in London’
- Walking is a great way to get around London
- Stresses walking as a convenient and easy way to get around
- The transport/travel around Britain section provides information on trains, buses, cars, taxis, cycling, flights and cruises
- The safety and travel advice section talks about how to avoid being a victim of crime

**Road safety info**
- Look both ways as traffic might be coming from a different direction than you are expecting
- Cars drive on the left
- Look in both directions for oncoming traffic when crossing the road
- Always know where you’re heading
- Take the same precautions you would in any major city
- No mention of pedestrian safety!
UK-based information – official sources

Other official sources provide information about pedestrian safety aimed only at children.

There is a clear lack of visibly available information for tourists visiting London.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
<th>Information given</th>
<th>Road safety advice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Avoid rush hour** | • Walking is a good way to see London  
• Walking in London is fraught with danger  
• Traffic drives on the ‘wrong side’ of the road in the UK and London  
• London is a safe city for visitors to explore on foot once they are used to traffic driving on the left  
• London traffic is different to other countries  
• Visitors must learn how to cross the road safely  
• Be cautious and patient when crossing the street | • Expect cars to approach from directions you don’t expect  
• Look both ways before crossing the road  
• Observe the ‘look right/look left’ markings  
• Avoid rush hour  
• Observe the ‘look right/look left’ markings  
• Cars might not always stop at zebra crossings. Check both carriageways  
• Don’t cross at pelican crossings if red man shown  
• Observe the ‘look right/look left’ markings  
• Don’t rely solely on the green man. Wait for traffic to come to a complete stop |

There are places.com

Pedestrian Crossings

- Do you have good visual contact with the traffic? This is a critical part of any road crossing. Traffic should stop to pedestrian crossing at a zebra crossing. If not, don’t proceed. If the traffic is moving, make sure the pedestrian crossing is safe before crossing.

Look right/look left

- You may see a sign that says ‘Look right/look left’ on the road surface. This is a reminder to always check both ways before crossing.

Touruk.co.uk

Traffic Driving and Crossing the Road: Crossing the Street: a real danger!

- If you’re crossing the street, always walk through the visible stripes while vehicles are passing. If you step onto the road before the vehicle is clear, you’re not seen by the driver. Be careful when crossing at pedestrian crossings or zebra crossings. They are not used by drivers to cross the street, so they are not safe to use. Always use the crossing where there is visible stripes. Always, FIRST MCNCH, and then check both ways before crossing.

Virtualtourist.com

- Pedestrian crossings are also marked by white stripes. Traffic should stop at pedestrian crossings at zebra crossings. If not, don’t proceed. If the traffic is moving, make sure the pedestrian crossing is safe before crossing.

- Traffic signs indicate that the traffic is moving. Always, FIRST MCNCH, and then check both ways before crossing.

- Be cautious and patient when crossing the street.
UK-based information – unofficial sources

Information Source

- Walking is the best way to explore London
- The lack of information from official sources means that people may turn to unofficial sources instead.
- Cars have to stop if you step onto a crossing
- Pedestrians have as much right to use the roads as vehicles
- Walk in the road because it’s less crowded
- Jaywalking is not an offence
- Most cars will stop anyway if you jump out in the middle of the road
- Walk in the road where the pavement is blocked by streetworks etc.
- Fight your way through the crowds in the West End

Information given

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### Information Sources provided in other countries

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Information Source</th>
<th>Information given</th>
<th>Road safety advice</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Smart Traveller</td>
<td>• Terrorism&lt;br&gt;• Crime&lt;br&gt;• Money and values&lt;br&gt;• Local laws&lt;br&gt;• Entry and exit&lt;br&gt;• Health issues&lt;br&gt;• Local travel</td>
<td>• Nothing specific to London&lt;br&gt;• Look in both directions&lt;br&gt;• Don’t assume drivers will stop at zebra crossings&lt;br&gt;• Face oncoming traffic when walking on pavement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U.S. Department of State</td>
<td>• Entry and exit requirements&lt;br&gt;• Safety and security&lt;br&gt;• Crime&lt;br&gt;• ATM Fraud&lt;br&gt;• Traffic safety and road conditions</td>
<td>• Drink driving penalties&lt;br&gt;• Traffic moves on the left&lt;br&gt;• Speed limits&lt;br&gt;• Hard shoulders&lt;br&gt;• SOS phone boxes&lt;br&gt;• Towing services&lt;br&gt;• Public transport</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H.K. Road Safety Council</td>
<td>• Drivers&lt;br&gt;• Pedestrians&lt;br&gt;• Passengers&lt;br&gt;• Motorists&lt;br&gt;• Roadworks&lt;br&gt;• Learner drivers</td>
<td>• Do not rush&lt;br&gt;• Cross at designated spot&lt;br&gt;• Wait for green crossing signal&lt;br&gt;• Look both ways&lt;br&gt;• Wait for traffic to stop</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Low priority for road safety information

• Many sources of travel information on London promote London as a great “walking city.” There are so many sights to see, so much culture to experience and surprises around every corner. Furthermore, they often advise against driving in London.

• However, there does not seem to be a focus on pedestrian safety. Many sources mention general safety in terms of avoiding being the victim of a crime, talk about how to get around the city on the tube, buses and taxis and perhaps mention road safety for drivers. Only a few sources, mostly guidebooks, mentioned pedestrian safety.

• When pedestrian safety is mentioned (in guidebooks, on websites), it is usually in the “getting around,” “travel tips,” “fast facts,” “practical information” or “planning your trip” section of that media.

There is clearly an opportunity to do more in providing detailed and reliable pedestrian safety information to overseas visitors.
Low priority for road safety information

Given that there is such a low focus on pedestrian safety information for tourists, it is not surprising that overseas visitors give the subject very little attention.

- **Other holiday concerns are more likely to take priority:**

  Overseas visitors are extremely unlikely to actively seek out pedestrian safety information when planning a trip to London.
Main findings

Areas of confusion

Mindset

Risk behaviours
Why are tourists at particular risk?

Visitors to London, particularly those who are visiting for the first time, do not adapt their behaviour to a foreign city i.e. they adopt the same approach they would do in their own country.

Many unintentional risk behaviours are exhibited equally by tourists and London natives alike.

But tourists’ unfamiliarity with the (written and unwritten) ways of the road in London puts them at particular risk.

So what confuses tourist pedestrians in London?.....
Confusion area 1 – Pelican crossings

- Pelican crossings are similar in most countries, but slight differences can cause confusion.
- Some tourists don’t know what to do if both they and the traffic are facing a red light, and often they take a risk and cross.
- Some are initially unaware they need to press a button to change the lights.
- Some tourists feel traffic lights in London give pedestrians less time to cross than in their home country e.g. France, Japan, Germany.
- In America the time left for crossing is actually displayed (see right).
Confusion area 2 – Other crossing points

• Some tourists are unfamiliar with zebra crossings and are unsure how they should be used.

• Others misunderstand this type of crossing based on similar crossings in their country origin e.g. they believe it represents a suggested crossing point but does not oblige drivers to give way to pedestrians waiting to cross.

• Jaywalking is very common in London and some tourists copy this behaviour, even if they are not used to doing so in their home country.
Confusion area 3 – Nature of traffic

• Traffic coming from the ‘wrong’ direction
  - Many visitors find themselves looking in the wrong direction for traffic when crossing the road

• Tourists new to London are often surprised by the sheer number of buses
  - The fact many of these are double-decker makes them particularly intimidating

• Some tourists do not realise some roads allow two lanes of traffic in the same direction
  - Therefore they do not always check to make sure nothing is being obscured by the vehicle nearest to them e.g. a speeding motorcycle behind a slow-moving bus

• Tourists are sometimes surprised by cyclists weaving between traffic
  - Sometimes they do not realise they are crossing a cycle lane
Main findings

Areas of confusion

Mindset

Risk behaviours
Some tourists are taken aback by London’s busy streets

- Many tourists are surprised by the pace of London life
- They have the impression that everyone is in a rush, and this can make walking on busy streets quite stressful
- However, some feel London is no different from other large cities in this respect
- To cope with the speed and the crowds, tourists initially adopt a mindset of vigilance
  - They claim to be alert to the dangers around them
Tourists have a lot to think about when they are walking around London

- Although tourists claim to appreciate the risks they face as pedestrians, their attention is often taken by other concerns:
  - **Navigation** – looking at maps/signs so as not to get lost (particularly challenging for non-English speakers)
  - **Sight-seeing** – admiring the surroundings and taking photos
  - **Taking care of other members of the party** – e.g. young children
  - **Sharing conversation** with fellow holiday-makers
Some tourists suggested that central London is actually *less* dangerous for pedestrians than other places they have been.

**Roads out of the city centre are more dangerous because the speed limit is higher and drivers are less on the lookout for pedestrians.**

**Drivers in London drive quite quickly, but they respect pedestrians more than in some other cities, e.g. Paris or New York.**

**The sheer number of people means that pedestrians have an unspoken right of way in the city centre: “One car can’t knock down 200 people.”**
Several other factors also affect tourists’ mindset

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Alone vs in group</th>
<th>Place of origin</th>
<th>Lifestage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Getting lost is a particular concern for solo visitors, because they can’t rely on companions to lead the way</td>
<td>• London drivers seem accommodating relative to Southern European countries</td>
<td>• Parents of small children take most care on the roads because they want to protect their family and set a good example for them to follow</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Individuals in a group feel less onus to pay attention to their surroundings</td>
<td>• Tourists from smaller towns struggle to get used to the high traffic volumes – just as they would in other big cities</td>
<td>• Older people are less confident in reacting to traffic and are more likely to wait for lights to change</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• They tend to be more carefree and interested in sharing their experiences with their companions</td>
<td>• German and Japanese tourists find it hard to adjust to a more relaxed attitude to crossing roads</td>
<td>• Teenagers and younger adults are less intimidated by the traffic and more happy to ‘improvise’ on the roads</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Pedestrian mindset changes over time

**TOURISTS (BRIEF STAY)**

- Conscious of not fully understanding ‘the way things work’, so alert to potential dangers
- Aware of their ‘foreigner’ status, so more likely to retain their own sense of how they should behave on the roads
- Sightseeing/relaxing so not in a hurry to get from A to B
- Struggling to navigate the city/not get lost

**RECENTLY MOVED TO LONDON**

- Gradually start to adopt local behaviour – taking pride in blending in with the locals
- More likely to be in a rush – sorting out day-to day affairs rather than sightseeing
- Can become complacent/over-confident over time
Main findings

Areas of confusion
Mindset
Risk behaviours
Exploring pedestrian risk behaviours

- Although tourists claim to be alert to the dangers of being a pedestrian in London, we found that many do routinely take risks when walking around the capital.

- This risk-taking can be segmented into two categories:
  
  - **Intentional risk-taking** – deliberately taking ‘minor’ risks in order to save time/keep up with friends.
  
  - **Unintentional risk-taking** – unwittingly putting oneself at risk through habit or lack of attention.
### Intentional risk behaviours

Tourists frequently take intentional risks on the roads, for several reasons:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Description</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>They want to keep up with their companions</td>
<td>They become impatient whilst waiting to cross a busy road</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>They observe the locals and sometimes try to copy their behaviour</td>
<td>They are over-confident in their belief that the roads work in the same way whichever country you are in</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of intentional risk behaviours

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Behaviour</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Crossing half-way across a road and waiting between two lanes of traffic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing between two vehicles in a moving flow of traffic</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing between stationary vehicles caught in traffic even though they are on a green light</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing on a red light because the traffic is being held at a red light too</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking on the wrong side of barriers (i.e. along the edge of the road) to beat the crowds</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Examples of unintentional risk behaviours

- Taking a first step into the road without looking
- Herding – getting swept along with the crowd
- Talking with friends and not paying attention to traffic
- Stepping out into the road to avoid obstructions on the pavement
- Taking a photo and not paying attention to traffic
Unintentional risk behaviour 1 – ‘First step free’

Some pedestrians have a tendency to step out into the road and *then* look around to check it is safe to cross.
Unintentional risk behaviour 2 – ‘Herding’

Those walking at the back of a group often follow those in front as they cross the road, without checking for traffic for themselves. Some respondents admit to not even realising they have stepped onto a road because they are just following the crowd e.g. when walking along a crowded Oxford Street.
Unintentional risk behaviour 3 – ‘Talking with friends’

Tourists often put themselves at risk because they are engrossed in conversation and not paying attention to the roads and vehicles around them.
Unintentional risk behaviour 4 – ‘Avoiding obstructions’

Obstructions such as road works can force pedestrians to move away from the pavement, and the noise can make them less aware of oncoming traffic.
Unintentional risk behaviour 5 – ‘Taking a photo’

Tourists often like to record their experiences by taking photos and videos – sometimes losing awareness of the roads and traffic around them
Intentional risk behaviours are perceived to be far more dangerous than unintentional ones.

- Intentional
  - Crossing on red
  - Ignoring barriers
  - Crossing between stationary traffic
  - Crossing between moving traffic

- Unintentional
  - First step free
  - Talking with friends
  - Taking a photo
  - Herding
  - Avoiding obstructions
  - Crossing halfway

Low perceived risk

High perceived risk
Conclusions
Conclusions (1)

- Currently there is very little pedestrian road safety information available to overseas visitors to London. Although crossing the road is relatively low-involvement – both at home and abroad, most visitors say that they would find information and advice related to pedestrian safety useful. Any communications will need to take into account the fact that crossing the road is relatively low-involvement and that people are unlikely to actively seek out information.

- The sources which people are likely to expect to provide them with this type of information rarely do so (both from within the UK and outside).

- Instead they are far more focused on providing information on safe driving, places to visit, crime and modes of transport for getting around London. While many of these recommend walking as an excellent way to explore London, they provide very little in terms of doing it safely.

- Official government websites provide pedestrian safety information, but this is targeted at children in general, rather than highlighting the specific issues that overseas tourists are likely to be faced with.

- As a result, there is a danger that people will instead turn to unofficial information sources such as blogs. We have found that these can be inaccurate and provide people with dangerous advice.
Conclusions (2)

• Many tourists claim they are taken aback by the pace and dynamism of London when they first arrive.

• Although this can make them vigilant as they consciously attempt to adapt to the city, sometimes this is not possible because of other distractions (e.g. seeing the sights, talking to friends).

• There are several factors which can affect the mindset of tourists as they walk around London:
  - Lifestage – younger tourists tend to take more risks than older people and parents with children.
  - Alone vs in a group – those in groups tend to pay less attention to the traffic around them.
  - Place of origin – those from certain other countries can struggle to adapt to London roads.
  - Length of time spent in the city – spending longer in London can lead to a more relaxed mindset but also to complacency.
Conclusions (3)

• There are several factors which can cause overseas visitors to take risks when walking around London. There are some key areas of the road system which can result in confusion, and result in risk-taking behaviour, be it intentional or unintentional. The main sources of confusion are:

Pelican crossings:
- Slight differences in crossings in different countries
- Unaware of the need to press the button
- Uncertainty over who has the right of way
- Shorter time to cross than they expect

Other crossing points:
- Tourists are unfamiliar with zebra crossings
- Uncertainty over who has the right of way

Nature of traffic:
- Coming from the other direction
- Surprise at the sheer volume of traffic and the speed it is travelling
- Cyclists weaving through traffic and not stopping at signals or crossings
Conclusions (4)

Tourist pedestrians take both intentional and unintentional risks when walking around London:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intentional risk-taking</th>
<th>Unintentional risk-taking</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Deliberately taking ‘minor’ risks in order to save time/keep up with friends</strong></td>
<td><strong>Unwittingly putting themselves at risk through habit or lack of attention</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing half way and waiting between two lanes of traffic</td>
<td>Taking a first step into the road without looking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing between vehicles in a moving traffic flow</td>
<td>Herding – getting swept along with the crowd</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing between stationary vehicles</td>
<td>Talking to friends</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Crossing on red</td>
<td>Avoiding obstructions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Walking on the other side of barriers</td>
<td>Taking photos</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Conclusions (5)

• In general it is the intentional risks, such as crossing between two moving vehicles, which they perceive to be dangerous
  - The unintentional risks they take, such as walking at the back of a large group, are considered relatively trivial in comparison

• Although London natives exhibit many of the same risk behaviours, tourists are at greater risk because of their unfamiliarity with certain aspects of the traffic system in London
  - Confusion around road crossing points and conventions, as well as sometimes complicated road systems can lead to tourists suddenly finding themselves ‘out of their depth’ when walking in central London
Conclusions (6) – Why do people take risks?

Life is full of risks. Every day people make decisions where the outcome matters but the nature of the outcome is uncertain. As pedestrians, people take actions – whether consciously or unconsciously – where they cannot possibly fully comprehend the outcome of their actions. People have developed habits and strategies that enable their pedestrian lives to flow freely.
Conclusions (7) – Why do people take risks?

- As we have seen, people’s approach to managing risks as pedestrians are determined by a complex interplay of conscious and subconscious factors. Decisions are balancing the likelihood of a positive desired outcome (e.g. I get across the road more quickly) and the avoidance of an unwelcome negative outcome (e.g. getting hit by a car).

- Risk-taking attitude can properly be understood as a combination of:
  - The sources and nature of uncertainty,
  - The degree to which something matters

- Any communications will need to be mindful of the fact that different things matter to different people to varying degrees, and in different circumstances (the perception of risk is situational and dependent on context). A risk perceived by one person may be perceived as normal to others.
Conclusions (8) – A model for behaviour change

We envisage that TfL’s strategy for improving visitor pedestrian safety will use behaviour change theory to structure its approach.

**Integrated Model of Behaviour Change:**

1. **They know what you want them to do**
2. **They buy into it**
3. **They have the knowledge and skills to do it**
4. **Nothing is stopping them doing it**

**Implications**

- Do you need to raise awareness of the dangers of current behaviour?
- Do you need to challenge values and beliefs, change attitudes, promote benefits to make sure they outweigh costs, motivate concordance, etc?
- Do you need to improve knowledge and skills to encourage behaviour change – do they know what signs mean etc?
- Do you need to change your service / access to your service to ensure uptake etc? Do they know where to look for signs? Are they visible?
Conclusions (9) – Understanding risk attitude

To understand how to encourage buy in, we need to think again about people’s attitudes towards risk-taking. Risk has two sides to it – likelihood and impact.

**Likelihood:** If an uncertain event is very unlikely then people are likely to be less inclined to adapt their behaviour.

**Impact:** The consequences of the event might be very significant i.e. they get killed!

If a number of people were faced with the same decision about whether to cross the road at a precise moment, different choice would inevitably be made, driven by the perception by each individual of the underlying risks and the degree to which they mattered.

To encourage a reappraisal of current behaviour, likelihood and impact both need to be perceived as significant. Different individuals or groups are currently likely to perceive both likelihood and consequences differently, leading to different decisions. To encourage consistent behaviour amongst different visitor groups, interventions will need to be attitudinally and culturally relevant.
Recommendations
What should be the aim of pedestrian safety communications?

Road safety communications need to:

**Dissuade** pedestrians from taking *intentional* risks on the roads

**Educate** tourists about the *unintentional* risks they take on a regular basis

- Any communications will need to take into account the fact that crossing the road is relatively low-involvement – both in people’s home countries and when travelling abroad.
  - Comms will need to be positioned in a way that cuts through this lack of involvement
  - In order to be relevant comms will also need to be presented in a way that people don’t just think it’s only telling them things they already know
Ideally, road safety advice should be communicated both *during* and *before* a tourist’s stay in London

**Before tourists arrive...**

- Posters in UK airports/ international rail stations
- Leaflets provided by travel agents in local market
- Road safety information provided when purchasing flight tickets/visas

**Once tourists are in London...**

- Road safety advice on existing map posters (on street and in tube/rail stations)
- Signs on the road itself are used, but more signs at eye-level could be better e.g. at designated crossing points
- Not everyone speaks English so pictures can make message clearer
Regent’s Street

Dangerous behaviour observed

• Crossing in between stationary traffic, especially buses. Impossible to see whether anything is coming up on the inside
• Crossing away from designated crossing. Using the “central reservation” as a safe-haven
• People window shopping rather than paying attention to where they are going

Risks to pedestrian safety

• Lots of side streets. People unsure where traffic might come from

Helping pedestrian safety

• Look left / look right signs on the road surface are often observed. Arrows seem to aid comprehension
Oxford Circus

Dangerous behaviour observed

- Running across crossings when lights are about to change
- Cars not stopping when pedestrians expect them to
- Crossing in between stationary traffic

Risks to pedestrian safety

- People fighting against natural flow of crowd when they get out of the station. Stepping out onto the road to get through
- Non-visiters are in a hurry and often come into contact with slower-moving tourists. It feels stressful
- Not everyone understands the new crossing. Stress response leads people to cross when it’s not safe
Piccadilly

Dangerous behaviour observed

- People crossing without knowing whether it’s safe – herd and stress response
- People walking around in large groups often results in a herd response
- Running across pedestrian crossings
- Walking around street works – walking the wrong side of barriers
- Crowded and people struggling to find their way around. Fighting their way against the natural flow of the crowd. Often stepping onto the road

Risks to pedestrian safety

- People unsure over the flow of traffic – what direction it is allowed to travel in
- Signal controls blocked by street works
- Visibility blocked by street works taking place on pedestrian crossings and around traffic lights
Covent Garden

Dangerous behaviour observed
• Chatting with friends and window shopping
• People not crossing at the crossing

Risks to pedestrian safety
• Pedestrians paying less attention to roads when walking through pedestrianised areas
• Lack of signage means people are disorientated when emerging from the station
• Narrow streets e.g. Floral Street with delivery vans parked means that people step out into the road to get passed
• Lack of crossings at Bow Road. People crossing anywhere.

Helping pedestrian safety
• Cars driving slowly. Expect to stop for pedestrians
• Zebra crossing opposite LU station
Westminster

Dangerous behaviour observed

- People walking along taking photographs. Inadvertently stepping into the road to get that ‘perfect shot’
- Extremely hazardous jaywalking across four lanes of traffic
- People stepping out onto the road to get around street performers
- Crowds forming by souvenir and refreshment stands. Often spilling out on the road

Risks to pedestrian safety

- Fast-moving traffic. Drivers treat it as a mini race track. They often try to get in the lead before the road goes down to two lanes on Westminster Bridge
- Obscured view of traffic going from Parliament Square into Whitehall
- Wide crossings and people not knowing how long they have left before traffic starts moving again
Greenwich

Dangerous behaviour observed

- Coming out of the DLR station and crossing the road without looking
- Lots of people crossing away from the designated crossing – there is no crossing directly opposite the station
- On market days crowds are significantly heavier. Herding is common and traffic does not seem to be accommodating to pedestrians

Risks to pedestrian safety

- People walking in the road to avoid street works
- Difficult to appreciate which direction traffic is flowing

Helping pedestrian safety

- Clear signage allows people to navigate easily and results in co-ordinated flow of pedestrians
Quality Assurance

- This work was undertaken in accordance with the standards laid out in ISO 20252.
  - Ensuring a consistent quality of work to the highest standards in the industry and annual inspection by external assessors.
- Over 6,000 market researchers globally.
- Membership of all key MR bodies.