

**Congestion charging
communications
development**

10012

November 2010

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Research conducted by 2CV

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Summary of findings

- The research identified four critical success factors for a CC campaign :
 - To be comprehensive in terms of information transmission
 - To create empathy between drivers and TfL
 - To be flexible enough to encompass different messages
 - To be visually engaging
- None of the individual creative routes manages to meet these four criteria at present, although different elements were working for each:
 - The map execution works best for the WEZ boundary change due to the detail and clarity of the information contained within the execution
 - The “line drawing” character route (beekeeper) is good for empathy in terms of fine avoidance, but both of the worked up illustrative styles demonstrated that CC should not try to be charming.
 - For Auto Pay the ‘save £1’ message is potentially confusing and not very inspiring versus the “protect yourself” message
 - Doodles was appreciated for its clear headline and simple style, but the specific executions did not represent the messages ideally
- The ideal creative solution would be to combine the empathy of the line drawing character route with the clarity and comprehensiveness of the map execution, and go with that creative combination for both fine avoidance and WEZ boundary change, (omitting a ‘save £1’ message)

Summary of findings

- Whilst many people have come to accept the charge and some of the proposed changes, the default position in response to advertising for the charge is negative where there is no evident customer benefit
- Therefore, tone of voice will be particularly critical to the development of a congestion charging campaign moving forward
- Some key principles for Tone of Voice emerged from the research:
 - **Adult to adult tone:** present the facts, honest and forthright communications, avoid childish imagery
 - **Don't be charming:** where a significant customer benefit exists (e.g. protection in autopay) ads can stretch to wit and charm (e.g. beekeeper) but this is not accepted by customers if the message is not welcomed
 - **Leverage strong CC branding:** London drivers are highly attentive to the red CC logo and use of this in campaign, is attention grabbing
 - **Value-for-money advertising:** ads deliver comprehensive information efficiently without lavish design
 - **Simple illustrative style:** line drawings appreciated for being eye-catching (when coupled with logo) whilst not looking too expensive, charming or childish
 - **Represent the driver:** use imagery and words that are in the driver vernacular are highly engaging and emotive

Overall response to advertising

Four critical success factors for a CC campaign emerged from the research

Be Informative

Provide clear and comprehensive information on the changes to avoid confusion and frustration

Create Empathy

Where possible, represent the 'vulnerability' of London drivers and 'work ethos' of TfL

Visually Engage

Style can be used to accentuate branding, stand out, engagement and clarity

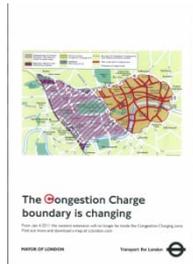
Be Flexible

Be able to carry a range of messages within a single creative vehicle

These factors should underpin any creative platform for the CC

Whilst none of the creative ideas evaluated met all four criteria, certain elements of all ideas were working well

Be Informative



Maps execution provides clear information representing the changes visually along with clear explanation

Create Empathy



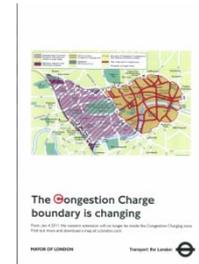
The Bee Keeper execution represents the vulnerability of London drivers and provides a tool for protection

Visually Engage



Bee Keeper style well liked for simplicity and softness / Doodles clear headlines also catch attention

Be Flexible



Counter example: Maps, whilst highly appropriate for WEZ, is not flexible across other messages



Save £1 a day with Auto Pay

Register a vehicle with CC Auto Pay and you'll save money, paying only £9 instead of £10 per day. Register your vehicle at ccolondon.com

*Annual registration payment of £19 per vehicle

MAYOR OF LONDON



Save £1 a day with Auto Pay

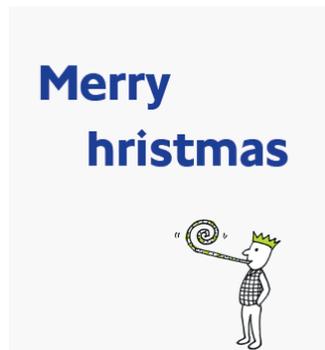
Register a vehicle with CC Auto Pay and you'll save money, paying only £9 instead of £10 per day. Register at ccolondon.com

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MAYOR OF LONDON



Detailed response: Character



**Merry
hristmas**

There will be no Congestion Charge between 23 December - 1 January
Find out more at ccolondon.com

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The Congestion Charge boundary is changing on 4th January 2011
Find out more at ccolondon.com

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Protect yourself against fines with Auto Pay
Register a vehicle with CC Auto Pay and each month your credit or debit card will be billed for the number of days that vehicle has travelled within the Congestion Charging zone. Which means you'll never get a fine again. Register your vehicle at ccolondon.com

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MAYOR OF LONDON



Characters: Neither of the proposed creative styles engaged the audience



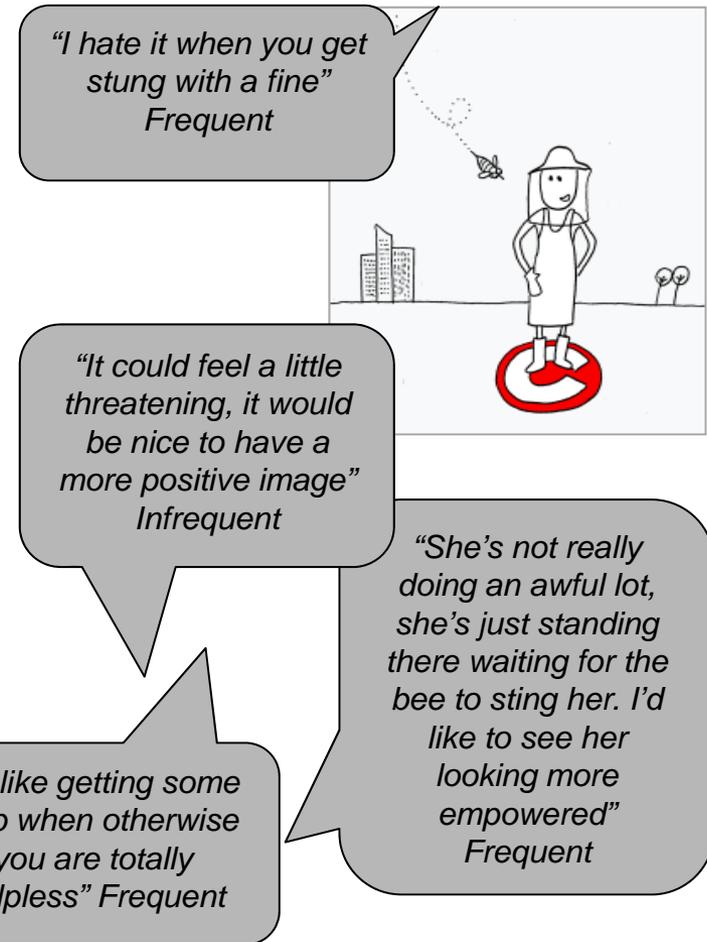
- Overall response was muted to the two illustrative styles:
 - Characters seen to be trying too hard to be charming
 - CC does not have permission to be charming and this can frustrate people
 - Bold colours more popular overall than pastels
- Drivers did not feel they were represented by the characters and couldn't empathise:
 - No visual / style connection with London / London roads
 - Roads seen to be driving out of a city was seen as an error
 - £1 seems like a burden rather than bonus
- 'Jetson' ad was perceived to be representing Canary Wharf rather than central London



Key learnings if a route is to involve illustration: London drivers need to be able to connect with the character and environment depicted

The visual metaphor of beekeeper worked well and demonstrated empathy

- Execution demonstrates empathy for the driver and understanding on the part of TfL / CC
 - Many felt that the protagonist was them and they were protecting themselves from the CC, represented by the bee
 - Has a wit to it and decoding the ad rewards the viewer
- Being 'stung' is in the customer vernacular for receiving a PCN
 - Something that most can appreciate, even if they haven't received a PCN
 - Demonstrates that TfL understand drivers
- Some felt the character could appear more empowered to facilitate even greater empathy



Visual metaphor of beekeeper pitched right for empathy and engagement

The visual style of beekeeper was popular

- Despite being entered into research as a scamp the style of beekeeper was popular amongst many
 - Seen as being simple and not over-designed (and therefore expensive)
- Many people liked the basic but not overly childish graphical style – soft edged and friendly (as in Doodle) – had some potential for CC
 - Limited colour palate was seen to enable the comprehension of the communication, especially the CC logo
 - However, others felt a touch colour could add engagement whilst retaining the style of the ad
- Learnings from other illustrative routes would indicate that it may be best to add central London iconography to the illustration

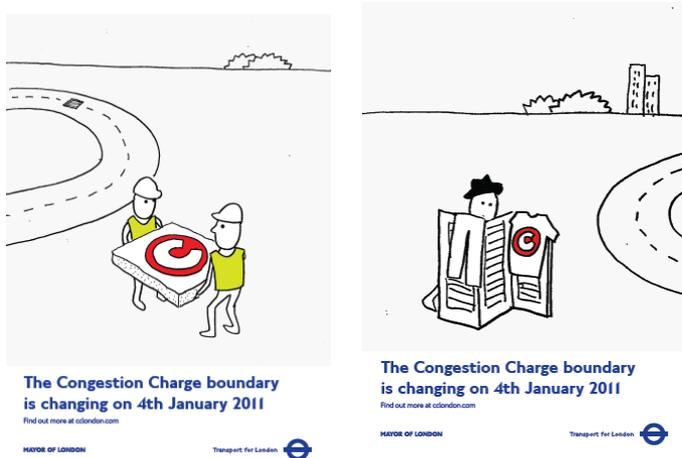
"I like the fact that there aren't many colours as it means it is easier to understand what's going on" Infrequent



"It looks a bit unfinished, it could do with a bit of colour on her dress or the sky to make it more eye catching" Frequent

A graphical style which softens the voice of CC / TfL without belittling the seriousness of how the charge is viewed has potential for development

Other executions do not deliver to the same degree

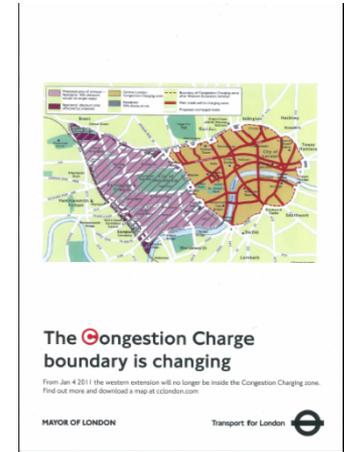
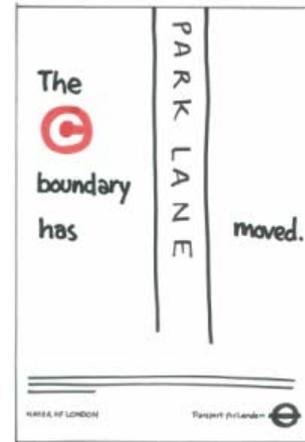


- Most importantly, the critical information of How and Where the boundary is changing is missing which makes customers feel frustrated and anxious
 - Would require a much clearer description in the headline or map to avoid negative response
- Characters moving the zone marker were warmed to and demonstrated a work ethic on behalf of TfL (servicing customers)
- Man changing was more abstract and required people to work too hard to decode

- Ad not intuitive to decode:
 - Question where 'C' went and who the character is meant to represent

*"Some religious people would probably get a bit angry.... They took the C off Christ"
Frequent*

*"If you were at your Christmas party you shouldn't be driving anyway"
Frequent*

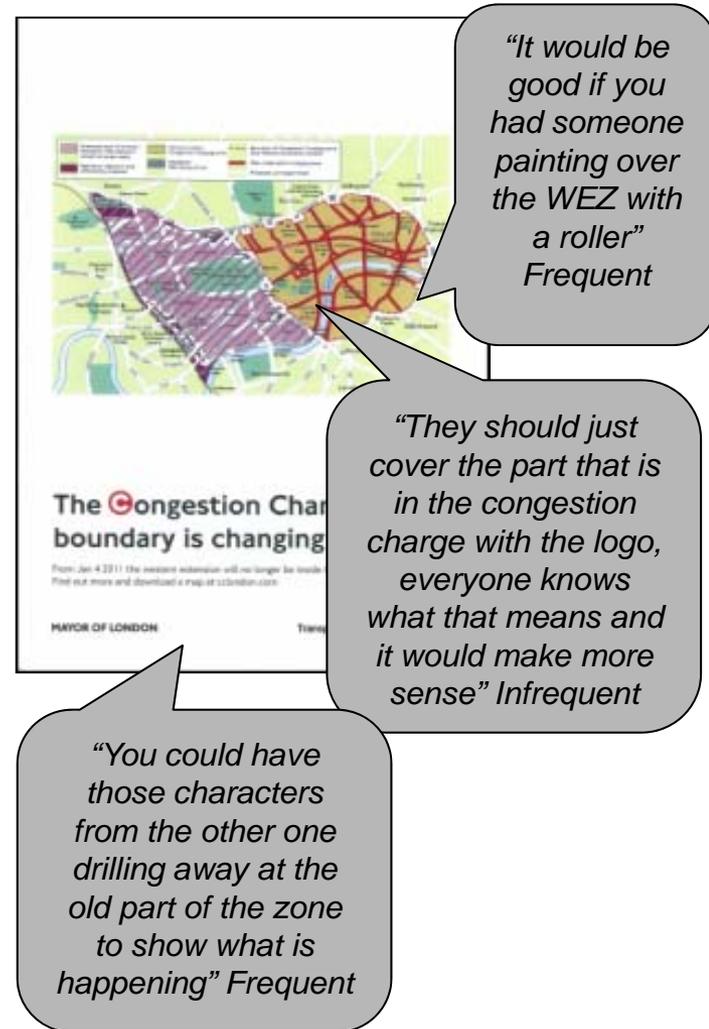


Detailed response: Maps Route



Maps route worked well for communicating WEZ changes

- Low awareness of changes means there is a need for absolute clarity of information, a simple and clear map was seen to be the best way to deliver this
- Be Informative: there is a balance to be struck in simplification vs. detail
 - Most felt the map used in the stimulus was too detailed and could be simplified to key roads, borders and monuments of significance e.g. Marble Arch
 - It wasn't clear which parts were included vs. excluded from the CCZ
 - Colour coding also confused people and needs to be very simple to clearly depict the changes
- Empathy: many felt some style elements of Characters could work with the map:
 - Workmen painting out WEZ or pushing it away to demonstrate activity / work on the part of TfL

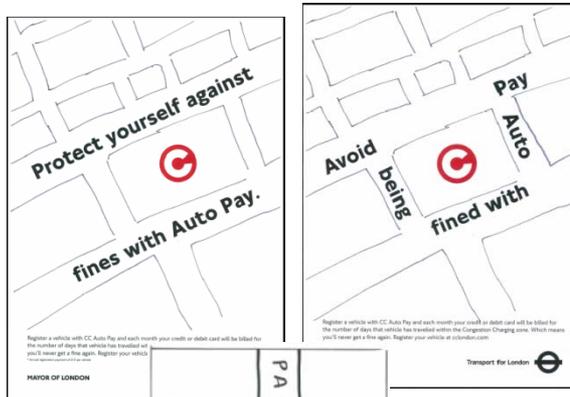


Map route is very useful to help illustrate the changes to the WEZ but could be optimised for clarity, engagement and empathy

However, Maps route has limited flexibility for other messages



- Maps are interpreted as being explicit tools for geographic, spacial and wayfinding information
- For other messages the Maps style offers no flexibility as people try to decode the message of the visual

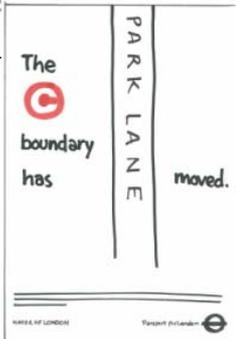


"I read that as E1, I was trying to figure out where it was"
Infrequent

"Is the zone between the streets? That makes no sense"
Frequent

"What does Seven Dials have to do with it?" Infrequent

"I look at Park Lane and think of the Exemption" Frequent



Detailed response: Doodle

Protect yourself against
fines with Auto Pay



Register a vehicle with CC Auto Pay and each month your credit or debit card will be billed for the number of days that vehicle has travelled within the Congestion Charging zone. Which means you'll never get a fine again. Register your vehicle at ccolondon.com

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Save £1 a day
with Auto Pay



MAYOR OF LONDON Transport for London

We've shifted
the boundary



MAYOR OF LONDON Transport for London

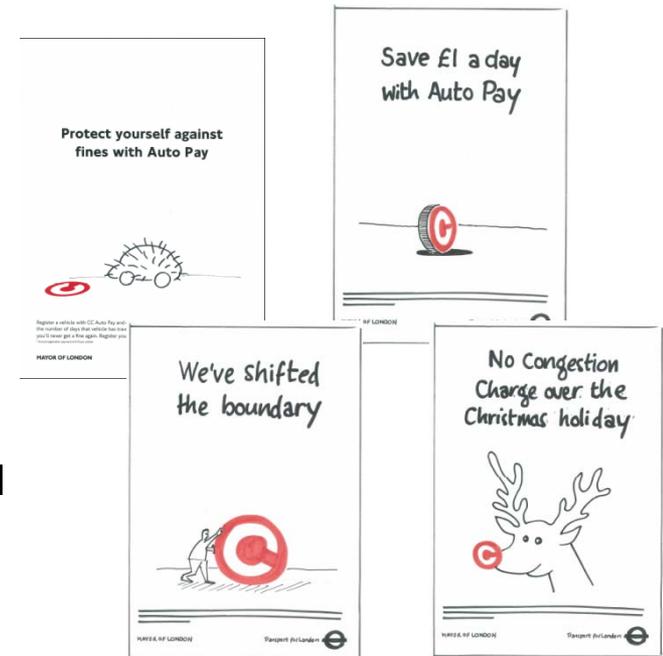
No Congestion
Charge over the
Christmas holiday



MAYOR OF LONDON Transport for London

Doodle liked for simplicity, stand out and position of headline, but executions failed to deliver empathy

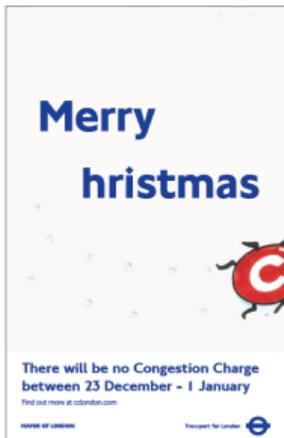
- Clear headline, uncluttered visual style does not look like it's trying too hard which is appreciated by people
 - Felt to be similar in style to Beekeeper
 - The use of CC logo delivers clear message and branding
- The £1 execution clearly illustrates benefit
 - Pound coin / CC logo device clearly understood and delivers the most important message
 - Reindeer is festive and engaging
- However, most executions lack the engagement and empathy that Beekeeper delivers:
 - Hedgehog metaphor not as immediate or engaging
 - Man pushing boundary seems like a lot of effort
 - 'Shifted' has negative connotations



"It doesn't have anything else on there, just tells you what you need to know – you save a £1!" Frequent

Clarity and simplicity appreciated by some, but lacks the empathy of Beekeeper

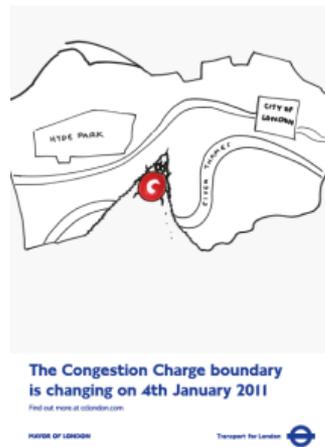
Detailed response: Ladybird



**Merry
Christmas**

There will be no Congestion Charge
between 23 December - 1 January
Find out more at cc.london.gov.uk

MAYOR OF LONDON Transport for London



**The Congestion Charge boundary
is changing on 4th January 2011**
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No more fines with Auto Pay
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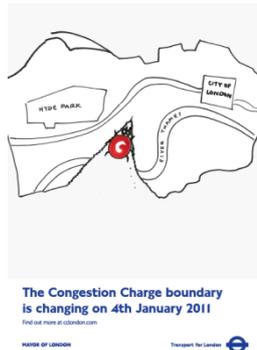
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MAYOR OF LONDON Transport for London

Ladybird: did not provide clear information or generate empathy



- Ladybird branding device was poorly received by the audience
 - Whilst many have come to be accepting of the charge, they are never likely to feel positive when the CC is trying to be charming or sell itself
- Ladybird depicted was also sometimes perceived to be menacing and this confused the message:
 - Eating the PCN
 - Taking away money
 - Destroying London
- However, the blue skies and London skyline were positively received
 - Clearly London, clearly CC
 - Engaging for the audience

CC cannot be charming or seen to be trying to 'sell' itself

**Detailed response to
headlines and copy**

Be Informative: when provided with clear information, the two key proposed changes can be seen positively by the majority of drivers



Boundary Change

- Some awareness
- A mayoral promise
- Felt to be an acknowledgement of the 'mistake' made when WEZ was added
- Responding to consumer demand



Auto-Pay

- Something CC drivers have been demanding for a long time
- An additional, convenient payment method tool for drivers
- Peace of mind that the CC is taken care of

"Boris said he'd remove the western extension. That was 2 years ago, I think there's still talk of it but I'm not sure" Frequent

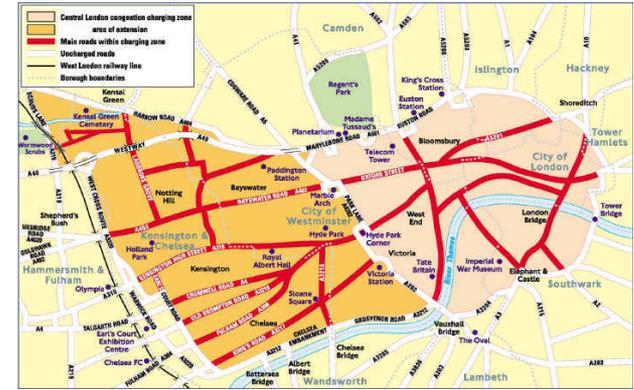
"I've heard they're extending the zone all the way out to the M25!" Frequent

.... But any cause for confusion or missing information causes anxiety and default criticism of TfL, driven by scepticism and negative media

Clarity in information is absolutely critical for success....

Boundary change: no prior knowledge can be assumed

- Drivers currently have very little awareness of the detail of the WEZ boundaries
 - Language of WEZ sounds familiar, but the details are vague
 - Not all drivers drive in WEZ or are familiar with the Zone
 - In place since 2007, there has been time for even regular users of this area to have forgotten precisely where the boundary lies
- Drivers don't automatically assume that changes would mean a reversion to the pre-WEZ state and instead there is concern that the CC may increase again
 - Under-informing risks fines for drivers and negative public perception of TfL / CC
 - People feel it is TfL / CC role to inform them of any changes



A need for detailed and clear communications on WEZ changes

Boundary change: overall response to text

Headline

- ✓ Referencing the date is important to allow for planning / prompt action
- ✗ All three headlines all hint at some movement or change without detailing the exact change
- ✗ Even more confusing when in past tense – why wasn't it announced before? Is this about a change that they already knew?
- ✗ Widespread interpretation, and therefore fear, that the zone was actually getting larger, brings to the fore urban myths surrounding the charge
 - A need to reconsider headline or image to clearly communicate reduction / removal of area
- ✗ People can feel frustrated at not being given the full picture – lack of detail can suggest underhandedness on part of TfL

Copy

- ✓ Referencing the date is important to allow for planning / prompt action
- ✓ The reference to the WEZ (in doodle and map) was felt to be helpful by most in indicating the type of change occurring, even if it is mainly frequent drivers that understand the terminology (even then checking would be required)
- ✗ Some not familiar with WEZ area / terminology and require a map / details to clarify
- ✗ Park lane is not a universally understood boundary but can be a useful reference point when combined with a detailed map
- ✗ Character executions with just a direction to the website were felt to be lacking in information – people can resent being directed elsewhere when the advertising could have been used to inform

A need for more clarity and detailed communications on WEZ changes

Fine Avoidance: is a very motivating benefit for Auto Pay

- Drivers spontaneously talk about the fear of getting inadvertent fines and worry of remembering to pay and many have the experience of forgetting or entering the zone accidentally or marginally
- The message is positive as it inherently provides peace of mind for all
 - Paying the charge via auto pay is preferable to PCN and also removes the hassle of paying every time
- But Auto Pay product is most likely to be taken up by frequents / people who have received PCNs
 - Particularly with £10 registration fee
- However, when noticed, the 'small print' of £10 registration can undo the initial positive response as drivers feel deceived

*"I've forgotten a couple of times, it's annoying, I drive in a few times a week but they show no mercy"
Frequent*

*"I'd sign up, they should have done this ages ago"
Frequent*

*"I like the idea, I don't know if I'd definitely sign up, but I'd look into it"
Infrequent*

Peace of mind is a key motivator for auto pay but also offers ease of use and less uncertainty around accidental entry into the CCZ

Fine avoidance: responses to headlines and copy

Headline

- ✓ '*Protect yourself*' friendly, like a helping hand to avoid the pain of PCNs
- ✓ TfL giving you the tools to help yourself, therefore welcomed
- × 'No more fines' felt to be too absolute and lacking in credibility, whilst unlikely PCNs could still occur
- × Some with PCN experience found the word 'fine' jarring, a reprimanding tone and also not accustomed language (vs. PCN or penalty)

Copy

- ✓ Most found the amount and nature of the information suitable for explaining the auto pay concept
- ✓ '*Never get a fine again*' is a motivating additional qualification of the endline, works well as a support
- × Many found the registration fee was too hidden away but causes less consternation when the benefit isn't linked to cost saving
- × Some still reluctant to register and small copy of registration fee can confound this

Positive headline with clear copy most welcomed

Save £1: personal savings are hard to calculate

- Whilst people are motivated by saving, the save £1 message is seen to lack clarity and cause confusion
- The ads contains three messages to process at once (save a £1, increase in CC and registration) which prompts confusion, miscalculations and frustration:
 - Price increase to £10 when hidden in text of ad feels slightly dishonest
 - £1 doesn't feel like much of a saving (esp. for Infrequents)
 - Registration fee compounds this feeling
 - The sub small print feels deceptive
 - Need to go into the zone more than 10 times to see a benefit
 - It can also be perceived to be encouraging drivers to drive within the congestion zone
- Furthermore, problems in calculating cost saving means it isn't currently the primary reason for signing up to auto pay – protection more motivating

"It is a saving but is also going up, its like they are giving with one hand and taking with the other"
Infrequent

"I would expect that this wouldn't be in isolation, there would be stuff in the papers etc. if the price is going up" Frequent

"A pound isn't really that much money, its the same price as a bar of chocolate or a bag of crisps"
Frequent

It is hard to provide clarity without the help of a checker tool so Save £1 message may be best avoided in comms

Summary and conclusions

Summary of findings

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