Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnels

Twelve-month monitoring report

July 2026

MAYOR OF LONDON

TRANSPORT FOR LONDON

EVERY JOURNEY MATTERS

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Project background

The history and basis for
London’s newest river crossing

Introducing the Silvertown Tunnel

Delivering the new river crossing in east London

Following its successful delivery, opening on time and on budget on 7 April 2025, the Silvertown Tunnel has been transforming cross-river journeys in east London for more than a year. Following five years of construction, the new tunnel emerged adjacent to the Blackwall Tunnel on the Greenwich Peninsula, forging a new route to the east under the river to Silvertown and the Royal Docks. This 1.4km-long twin bore road tunnel, with a dedicated bus and heavy goods vehicle (HGV) lane, is contributing to a step change in the public transport offering in this part of London, as well as supporting sustainable growth across east London.

The Silvertown Tunnel scheme was first proposed in 2012 and the application for its construction and operation was approved by the Secretary of State for Transport in 2018. The scheme covers the construction of the new tunnel and introduction of user charges at the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnels, and was implemented through a Development Consent Order. The aim was to address long-standing problems at the Blackwall Tunnel, including congestion, frequent closures and incidents, and low resilience caused by lack of suitable alternative crossings.

Since the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel, user charges have applied at both Silvertown and Blackwall tunnels. The user charges enable us to effectively manage the traffic using the river crossings to improve journey times and reliability and mitigate environmental impacts. They also help cover the design, construction, maintenance and operational costs. Discounts and exemptions are available for eligible people and vehicles, including low-income residents (for at least three years) and local businesses.*

The new Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network has been a huge success, with significant and sustained growth in bus journeys over the course of the year. This new zero-emission network of 21 buses per hour in each direction (at the busiest times) has been a gamechanger for cross-river public transport, boosting reliability and improving journey times on existing cross-river and other local routes. The Silvertown Tunnel also enabled us to introduce the innovative Silvertown Tunnel cycle shuttle, providing a new free cycle connection across the river in this part of London.

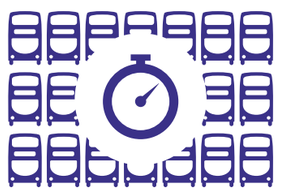
To help support local residents and businesses to cross the river via public transport and embed sustainable travel behaviour in the long term, we offered free trips on cross-river buses and refunded cross-river DLR trips until 26 May 2026, extending the original offer by seven weeks.

1.4km

long, twin-bore road tunnel with dedicated bus and heavy goods vehicle lanes in each direction

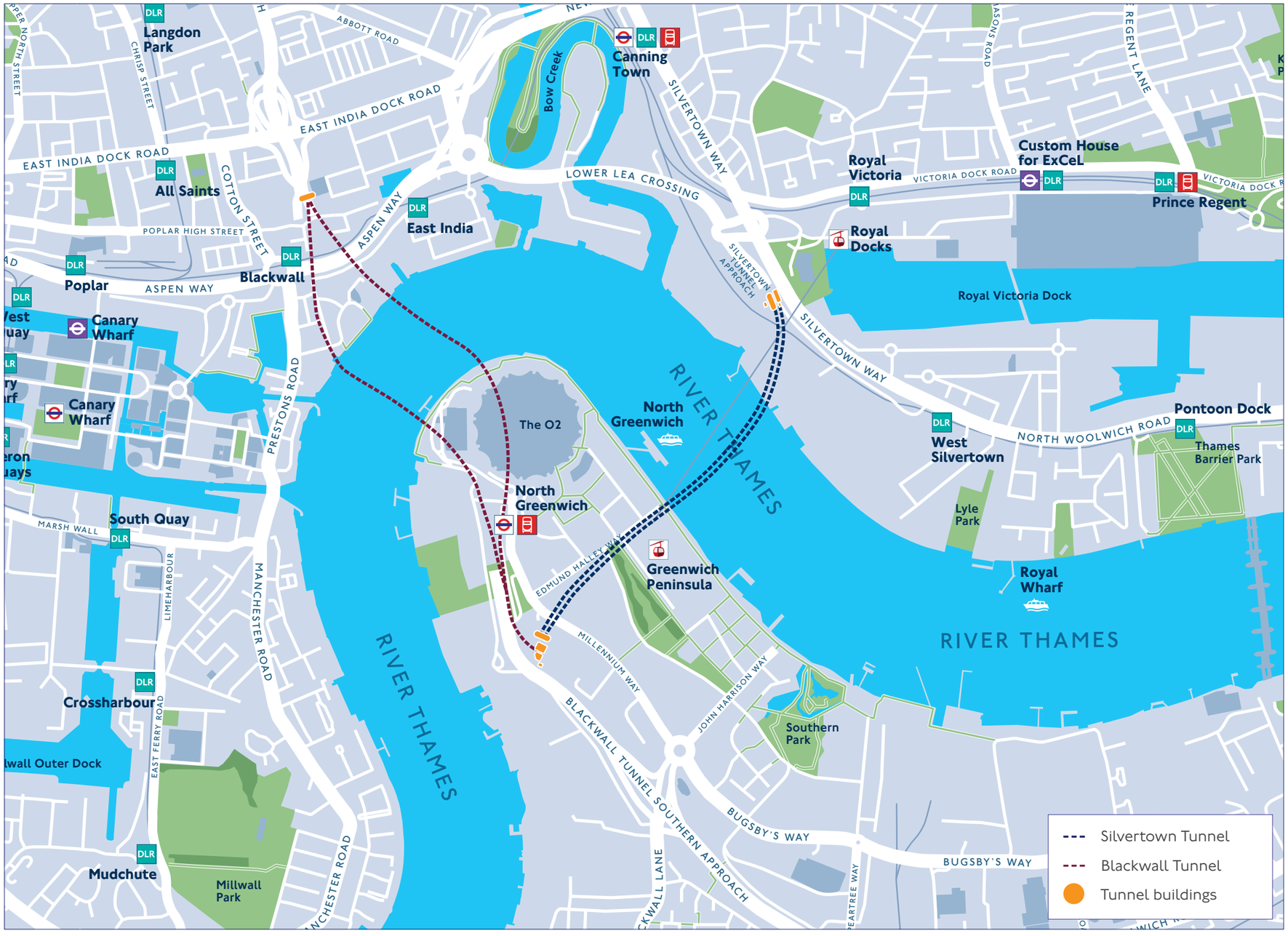
21

buses per hour travel via the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnels in each direction at the busiest times



* This discount is available to eligible local small businesses, sole traders and local charities in the Royal Borough of Greenwich or London Boroughs of Newham or Tower Hamlets

Location of the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnels



Collaborative development

The Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group was established in 2020 to support the development and implementation of the scheme. This critical stakeholder group has representatives from 12 London boroughs, the Greater London Authority (GLA), National Highways and TfL. The boroughs include Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Bromley, City of London Corporation, Greenwich, Hackney, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest.

Since this group was formed, it has been consulted on monitoring, the new cross-river bus network and the user charge. We have been sharing quarterly monitoring updates with this group throughout the first year.

More information, including reports, is on the group webpage.

Key findings

Impact of the Silvertown Tunnel after 12 months of operations

Over the first year we have seen positive impacts for Londoners, building on the early outcomes observed at three months. The data demonstrates that the scheme's objectives continue to be met, including managing traffic demand, reducing congestion and improving resilience, while supporting economic and population growth by providing improved cross-river transport links.

Reduced traffic congestion

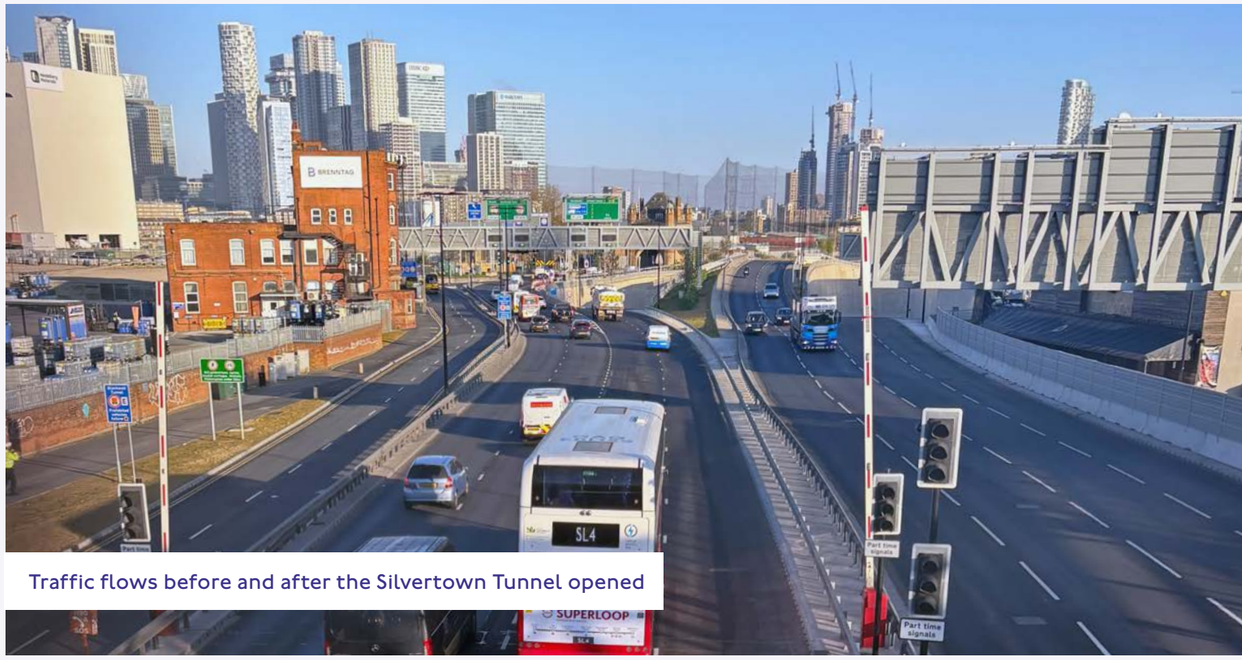
Congestion and queuing has significantly decreased at both approaches to the Blackwall Tunnel. On the A102 northbound approach to the Blackwall Tunnel from Sun in the Sands, journeys are now more than 58 per cent quicker in the morning peak and 47 per cent quicker in the evening peak. Cross-river journeys continue to be significantly faster than the baseline in all time periods and the frequency of overheight incidents has substantially reduced by 23 per cent compared to the previous year.

No increase in traffic levels

Overall traffic levels at all east London river crossings have been maintained below the baseline with no increase in weekday cross-river traffic demand. Traffic volumes align with our pre-opening forecasts and flows on key corridors have also remained broadly stable. The Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels corridor continues to carry the majority of cross-river traffic in east London as expected.

A step change in public transport mode share

Bus ridership has grown on the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network. More than 30,000 customers now use these buses on an average day. Compared to the year before the tunnel opened when only one bus route used the tunnels, there has been a more than 290 per cent increase in bus journeys across the river. This means that more than 11 per cent of trips through the tunnels are now made by bus across the three routes. Previously, when only the 108 crossed the river, 2.8 per cent of trips were by bus through the Blackwall Tunnel.



Traffic flows before and after the Silvertown Tunnel opened

More frequent and reliable bus services

With 21 zero-emission buses an hour crossing the river in this area, 15 more services than previously and double-deck buses for the first time, using the bus to cross the river is easier than ever. Journeys on route 108 through the Blackwall Tunnel are significantly more reliable, with a 28 per cent reduction in excess wait time. Journey times northbound through the tunnel segment are at least 2.5 minutes faster since the Silvertown Tunnel opened. Similar improvements have also been seen on other bus services in the area.

A new cross-river cycling connection

On a typical weekday, the new cycle shuttle transports around 100-130 cyclists and their cycles across the river. This is similar to the number of cyclists who use the Woolwich Ferry but significantly higher than cyclist demand at the London Cable Car. In line with the Development Consent Order, the service will continue to operate until at least April 2028. We are also exploring the potential to broaden access to the service to pedestrians.

Encouraging sustainable journeys

To ensure local residents could benefit from the new cross-river connectivity, all journeys on the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network were free on pay as you go until 26 May 2026, and cross-river DLR trips were also refunded over the same period. On an average week we refunded 5,025 cross-river DLR trips and more than 10 million bus journeys made use of the free travel offer over the first year.

Improving air quality

Air quality has continued to improve in the area. Compared to the previous monitoring year, nitrogen dioxide concentrations are on average 17 per cent lower and there are no locations where it exceeds the legal limits. Our air quality monitoring sites have also shown lower nitrogen dioxide concentrations than the average of other inner London roadside sites.

User charges effectively managing demand

Our user charge review has shown that the user charges are operating as anticipated to manage demand at Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels without significant impacts to other east London crossings or routes. The user charge revenue fully covers the payments we make to Riverlinx for designing and building the new crossing, as well as its maintenance and operation, showing the scheme is affordable to TfL and provides value for money. Compliance with the user charge continues to be high, at around 90 per cent, and the number of penalty charge notices issued has steadily decreased.

Supporting eligible customers through discount schemes

Almost 4,200 residents have now registered for the low-income residents' discount. Local businesses, charities and small traders have also been taking advantage of the business discount, with around 1,300 vehicles registered for the scheme. Blue Badge discount registrations have also increased each month, with a 14.3 per cent increase in the total number of registrations compared to January 2025 when we started pre-registration for the discounts.

More than 3.6 million vehicles are now signed up for Auto Pay, which is up from around 2.6 million in January 2025 when pre-registration for tunnels user charge discounts opened, which equates to a 42.6 per cent increase.

11%

of trips through the two tunnels are by public transport

On average

17%

lower nitrogen dioxide concentrations compared to before the Silvertown Tunnel opened

10m+

bus customers enjoyed free travel on the Silvertown bus network in the first year

1m

additional users registered for Auto Pay since pre-registration opened for the tunnel user charges

Delivering the benefits

What the Silvertown Tunnel scheme set out to achieve

The project objectives were established in the Case for the scheme document during the Development Consent Order process. These set out how the Silvertown Tunnel scheme would optimise its direct and indirect benefits and deliver improvements for Londoners. The direct benefits of the scheme include resolving three key transport problems at the Blackwall Tunnel – congestion, closures and incidents, and resilience. Other indirect benefits achieved in connection with the scheme cover broader topics such as land use policy, environmental impacts, impact on local stakeholders and value for money.

Silvertown Tunnel project objectives

	Project objective
PO1	To improve the resilience of the river crossings in the highway network in east and southeast London to cope with planned and unplanned events and incidents
PO2	To improve the road network performance of the Blackwall Tunnel and its approach roads
PO3	To support economic and population growth, in particular in east and southeast London by providing improved cross-river transport links
PO4	To integrate with local and strategic land use policies
PO5	To minimise any adverse impacts of any proposals on communities, health, safety and the environment
PO6	To ensure where possible that any proposals are acceptable in principle to key stakeholders, including affected boroughs
PO7	To achieve value for money and, through road user charging, to manage congestion

Our monitoring programme aims to ensure we have the data to understand our progress in achieving these objectives. This monitoring report shows how each theme links to one or more of the project objectives, therefore setting out progress on realising the benefits.

Approach to reporting

Our monitoring strategy for the Silvertown Tunnel scheme

When permission was granted to construct the scheme, we committed to closely monitor and report on the impacts of the scheme through the Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy. This is to understand the impacts of the scheme and identify any mitigations that may be required for traffic and traffic-related environmental impacts.

All pre-opening and post-opening monitoring data is published online and can be found on the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group webpage.

For three years before the scheme opened, baseline reports were produced to look at impacts. The outcomes of these reports are collated in the summary baseline Travel in London focus report published in 2025.

Pre-opening monitoring

We began monitoring the baseline conditions in the area expected to be influenced by the tunnels in 2020. This enabled us to update our traffic and environmental models to identify any pre-opening mitigation that was needed, as well as develop the opening bus network and set the initial user charges.

It also enabled us to establish a baseline from which we can measure the impacts on local communities after the tunnel opened. For three years before the scheme opened, baseline reports were produced for traffic, air quality, noise and socioeconomic impacts. The outcomes are summarised in the Silvertown Tunnel Travel in London Focus report.

Post-opening monitoring

Now that the Silvertown Tunnel is open, we are committed to monitoring the impacts of the tunnel for at least three years until April 2028, although this monitoring period may be extended. Over the first year, we have prepared quarterly monitoring updates for the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group. These have focused on traffic, public transport and user charge data, because we needed a longer data series to ensure accurate and meaningful reporting of other aspects of the scheme.

We are monitoring the impacts of the tunnel for at least three years

Scope of this report

The areas that we are reporting on in this document are:

Traffic

- River crossing performance – average daily traffic flow, including vehicle type
- Key corridor performance on the A2/A102, A12 and A13 – average daily vehicle kilometres
- Journey times at river crossings and key corridors
- Resilience improvements

Buses and active travel

- Performance and patronage
- Journey time and speed
- Other local bus route improvements
- Cycle shuttle service and cycling at nearby crossings
- Other changes impacting on active travel

Social and environmental impacts

- Public transport concessions
- User charge discounts, such as low-income resident, business and Blue Badge holders
- Uptake by Blue Badge holders
- Socioeconomic and air quality impacts
- Wider environmental impacts

User charge

- Charges by vehicle type
- Method of payment
- Compliance and enforcement
- Financial performance

The full monitoring scope can be found in Appendix C. This includes elements that are not included in this report but will be reported on later this year as part of Travel in London or considered as part of future reporting to gain a holistic understanding of the scheme.

Supporting measures

When we opened the Silvertown Tunnel, we introduced a series of new and enhanced services, discounts and concessions to maximise the benefits and support local residents.

To make it as easy and attractive as possible for people to travel by public transport, we introduced a new bus network in this area. There are now 21 buses that are zero-emission at tailpipe crossing the river per hour in each direction at the busiest times, between 07:00 and 19:00 on Monday to Friday. Of these, 15 buses per hour use the Silvertown Tunnel, including the SL4 Superloop route, while six buses per hour use the Blackwall Tunnel.

Bus routes using the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnels – routes 108, 129 and SL4 – were free for the first 12 months. We also provided free (refunded) trips between King George V and Woolwich Arsenal, and Island Gardens and Cutty Sark/Greenwich on the DLR for the first 12 months. In February 2026, we extended both these free travel concessions until 26 May 2026.

To enable people to cross the river with their cycles, we introduced a regular cycle shuttle service through the Silvertown Tunnel. This was announced as free for at least 12 months, and in February 2026 it was confirmed that it would remain free for the foreseeable future.

We consulted on the opening user charges, discounts and exemptions in summer 2024, which can be found in Appendix A. A full list of discounts and exemptions is listed in Appendix B.

Analysing the data

Assessing the performance of the scheme against project objectives in the first 12 months

Traffic performance

We aimed to improve cross-river resilience in the area and road network performance at the Blackwall Tunnel

Project objectives

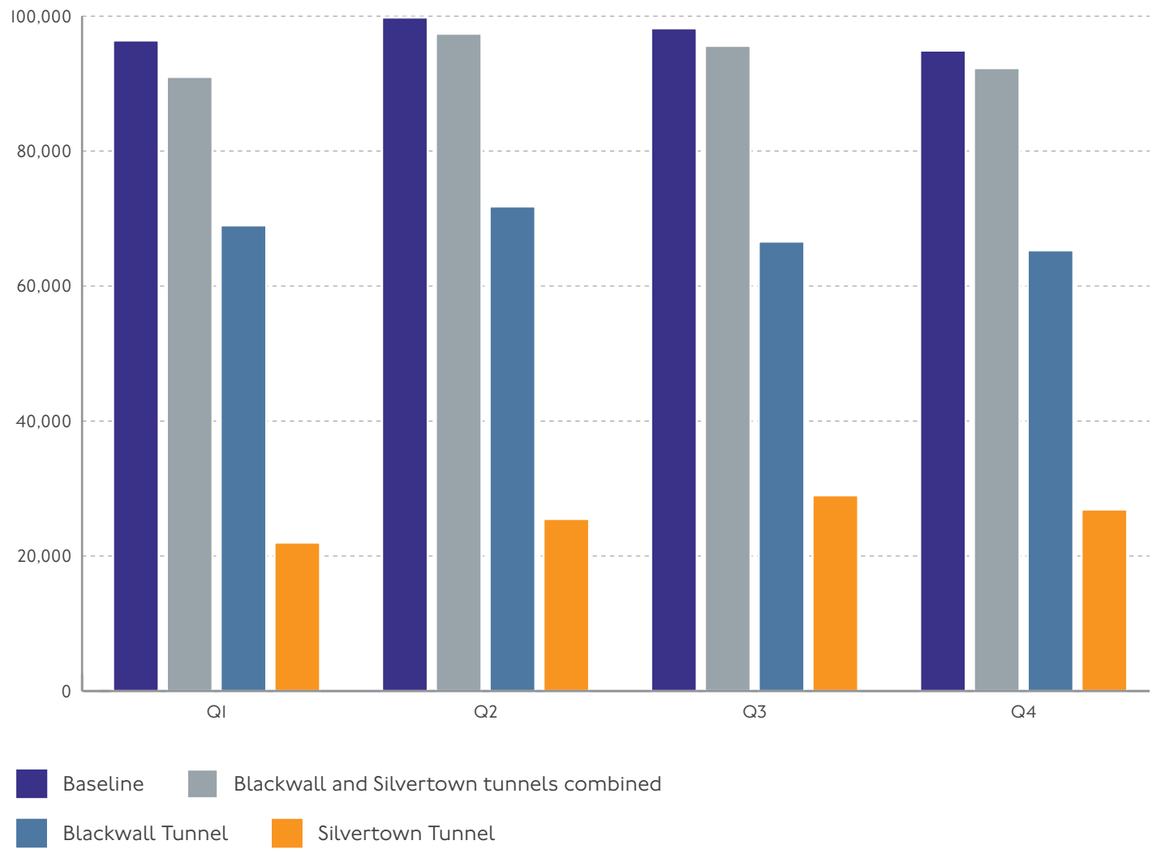
POI: To improve the resilience of the river crossings in the highway network in east and southeast London to cope with planned and unplanned events and incidents.

PO2: To improve the road network performance of the Blackwall Tunnel and its approach roads.

East London river crossings as a network

The opening of the Silvertown Tunnel has changed the dynamics of the east London river crossing network, but despite increasing capacity for cars and vans by 50 per cent, this has not led to an overall increase in traffic. When compared to the average for the same quarter in each of the previous three years, the average weekday traffic flows have remained below these levels in each quarter. This shows the new capacity is not inducing new traffic, which supports the scheme objectives of improving road network performance.

Daily average traffic flows (number of vehicles)



The two tunnels continue to carry most cross-river traffic in the east

After one year of Silvertown Tunnel operations, the combined average traffic flow at the Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnels is 94,084 on a typical weekday, which is lower than the baseline data for the Blackwall Tunnel only, for the three years prior to the scheme opening. However there has been a shift in the distribution of traffic between Blackwall and Silvertown over the first year, with the proportion of vehicles using Silvertown over Blackwall increasing, reflecting how drivers have adjusted to the new tunnel and journeys which are best suited to its alignment.

Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels continue to be the strategic east London river crossings, carrying the majority of cross-river traffic. There are still broadly the same proportion of HGVs using the combined crossing, with HGVs making use of the modern designed Silvertown Tunnel and its dedicated bus and HGV lane. There is no evidence that HGVs are diverting to other east London crossings to avoid the user charges. Demand from HGVs at the Woolwich Ferry has been falling, providing more capacity for local cross-river journeys. Cars and vans continue to have the largest overall mode share at Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnels at more than 85 per cent. The overall vehicle composition at all crossings has also remained consistent, with the majority of vehicles being cars.

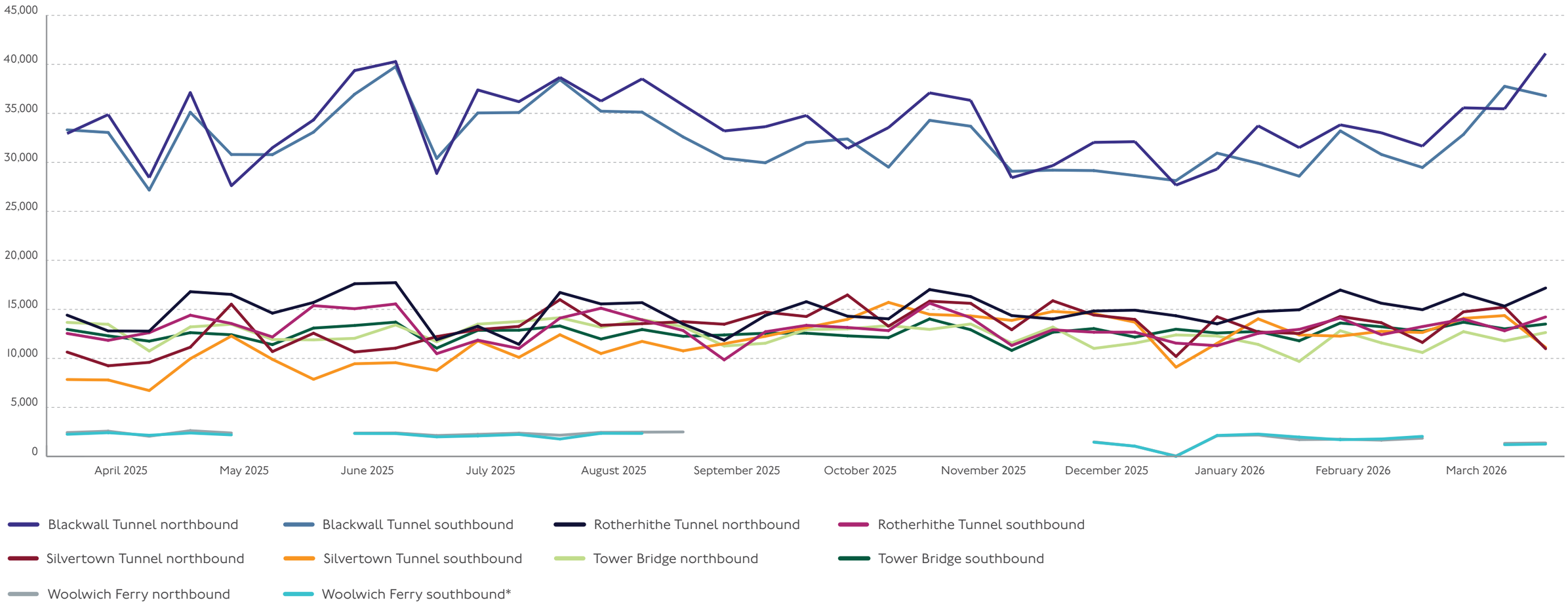
Focus on individual river crossings performance

The Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels are part of a wider system of river crossings in east London, which includes Tower Bridge, Rotherhithe Tunnel and Woolwich Ferry. The Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels continue to be the busiest of all the east London river crossings, carrying around 63 per cent of total traffic, with the adjacent crossings Rotherhithe Tunnel and Tower Bridge carrying similar proportions of the remaining traffic at around 17 per cent each. The Woolwich Ferry continues to carry the smallest proportion of east London cross-river traffic at around three per cent.

Compared to the three-year baseline, the Rotherhithe Tunnel has seen a three per cent increase in daily average weekday flow of around 855 vehicles, but no change at weekends. This suggests there is limited rerouting primarily affecting weekday travel. When comparing the post-opening data to the modelled forecasts, these align closely and do not show more traffic than predicted using this crossing. Tower Bridge has seen a five per cent reduction in daily average flow during weekdays, around 1,225 vehicles, and an even bigger reduction at weekends of eight per cent, around 2,117 vehicles. Demand at the Woolwich Ferry has consistently been higher in each quarter than the March 2025 baseline, but demand is still lower than that anticipated by our pre-opening modelling

While not a London river crossing nor formally part of our monitoring programme, we have also been reviewing the Dartford Crossing traffic flows using data provided by National Highways. There has been no significant change in traffic flows at this location.

Daily traffic flow by river crossing and direction (number of vehicles)



Overall, observed traffic flows from the first 12 months of scheme operation are consistent with our modelling expectations following the initial setting of user charges. Some of the neighbouring crossings have experienced smaller, mixed impacts, such as decreases at Tower Bridge, small weekday increases at Rotherhithe and increased use of the Woolwich Ferry. We are content there are no major issues linked to increased demand at river crossings that can be attributed to the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel, but will nevertheless continue to monitor all parallel river crossings closely.

* Woolwich Ferry sensors experienced numerous data outages over the first 12 months, which means there are gaps in the data shown in this graph

Woolwich Ferry

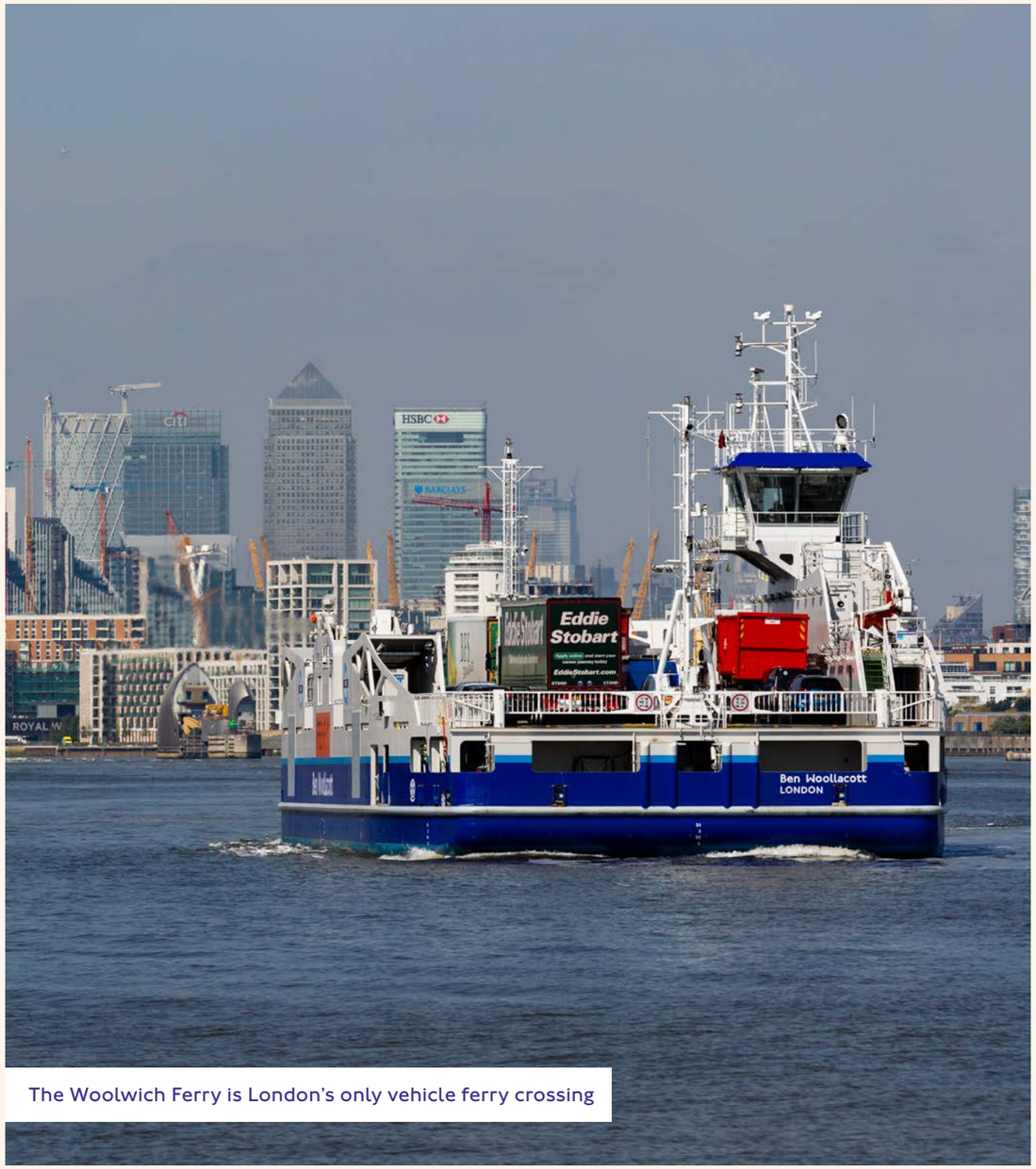
The Woolwich Ferry is a unique crossing in the east London river crossing network, providing the only vehicle ferry link across the Thames. Customers can only board the ferry when it is safely docked and the capacity of each crossing is affected by the type of vehicles wishing to board. It has been operating a two-vessel timetable since May 2024 and is currently available between 06:00 and 22:00 each day.

As a ferry not a free-flow tunnel, the Woolwich Ferry also has different operational concerns and dependencies to the cross-river tunnels and bridges. These include mechanical needs of the vessels and the need for staff to operate the ferries and oversee traffic management areas; as well as external factors such as weather and tidal conditions. Customers may have to wait for vessels to be available to board and at the busiest times this can lead to queuing, impacting the wider local road network. Taken together, this means the Woolwich Ferry has a capacity around 20 times lower than the Blackwall Tunnel.

Performance of the Woolwich Ferry over the last year has been impacted by several technical issues which have increased the number of disruptions to the service and impacted the ability to operate a consistent two-vessel service. This culminated in a six-week period during March and April 2026 when a one-vessel service operated while major engineering work was undertaken to renew the main generator engines on the other vessel. These works will improve the long-term reliability of the service.

There has also been a change in demand for ferry services compared to the baseline. While demand is now lower than in July 2025 (when we reported on it in our Three-month monitoring report), there are still more vehicles using the Woolwich Ferry than the baseline. Data from December 2025 to April 2026 shows 154 more vehicles are using the service on an average weekday and 551 more vehicles on an average weekend day when compared to the respective March 2025 baseline. However, these changes in traffic flow are still in line with what was anticipated in the pre-opening modelling phase.

While demand has reduced significantly during the past year, the technical issues also affect our ability to interpret if emerging trends at the Woolwich Ferry are likely to be sustained longer term. We continue to monitor key metrics such as compliance with traffic management regulations and workplace incidents to understand whether specific issues need to be addressed. In response to this complex array of issues, we are developing a longer-term strategy for the Woolwich Ferry to establish a longer-term vision for this service and guide any future investment.



The Woolwich Ferry is London's only vehicle ferry crossing

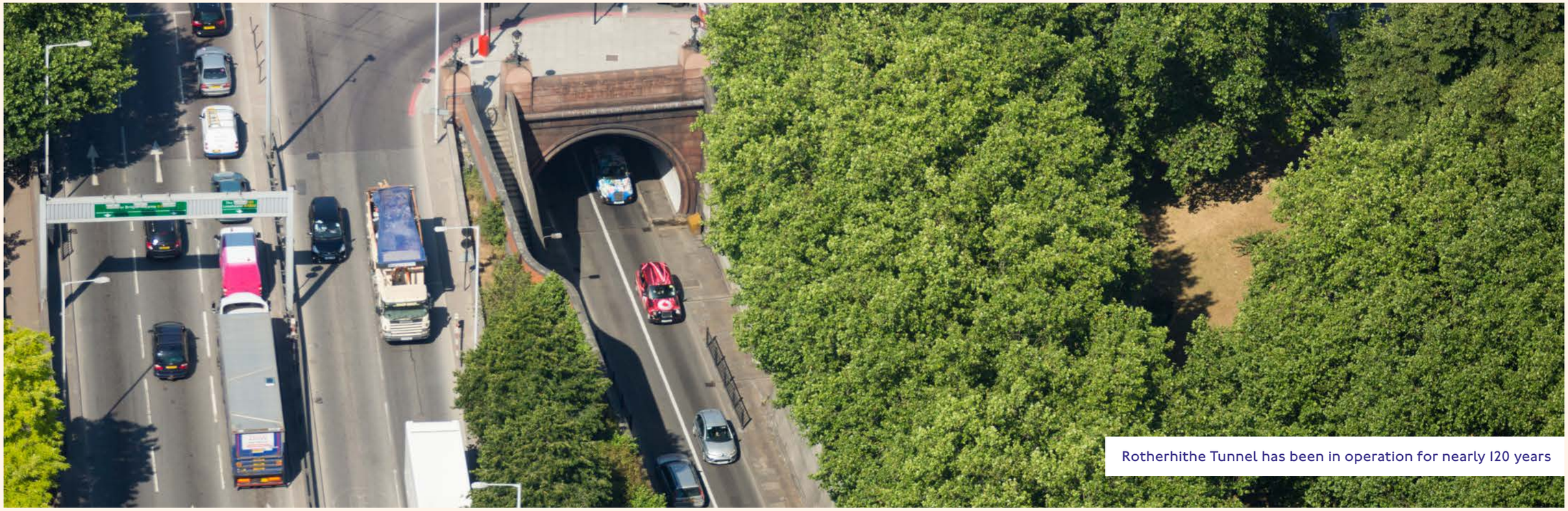
Rotherhithe Tunnel

The Rotherhithe Tunnel first opened to the public in 1908, when it was designed for horse-drawn carriages and pedestrians. As this structure is nearly 120 years old, it requires significant maintenance to meet modern safety standards, which has meant more frequent planned and unplanned closures.

Over the first year of scheme operations, the Rotherhithe Tunnel saw a small three per cent increase in daily average weekday flow when compared to the baseline. There has also been an increase in journey times in all periods of the day. However, these changes in traffic flow are below what was anticipated by the pre-opening modelling, meaning there is not more traffic than predicted using this crossing. The changes in journey time are also likely to be linked to the current restrictions on vehicles and travel through the Rotherhithe Tunnel.

Since December 2025, we have implemented a stricter closure policy at the Rotherhithe Tunnel to regulate the number of vehicles within the tunnel, which means the tunnel is temporarily closed if vehicles exceed a prescribed journey time threshold. When this occurs, additional vehicles are held outside the tunnel for a short period until traffic flow is regulated. This can suddenly pause traffic on the approaches, which in turn leads to localised congestion and impacts cross-river journey times. These restrictions are separate to the changes in traffic flow, and are primarily motivated by our evolving approach to enable us to operate Rotherhithe Tunnel safely.

We are working to improve safety elements of the Rotherhithe Tunnel to reduce the closures and impacts on traffic. The additional capacity provided by the Silvertown Tunnel will help ensure the east London river crossings remain resilient during these works.



Rotherhithe Tunnel has been in operation for nearly 120 years

Traffic performance on key corridors

Analysis of the wider road network shows overall stable traffic flow on the key corridors of the A2, AI2 and AI3. Looking at the annual weekday average daily kilometres travelled per corridors, traffic on each corridor was no more than three per cent higher than the baseline annual average. There were also reductions in traffic on two of the three corridors.

The AI2 has seen a reduction in weekday daily total kilometres travelled in both directions, with a two per cent decrease northbound and one per cent decrease southbound. There has also been a decrease on the A2 southbound of five per cent but a three per cent increase northbound, though the traffic changes within the corridor are more complex.

While journeys at a corridor level only show a slight increase northbound, compared to the baseline we have observed a reduction in traffic speeds and increased journey times on the A2 northbound from the Kent border to the Kidbrooke Interchange, where traffic from the A20 joins the A2.

Traffic speeds are significantly faster than the baseline after Kidbrooke. We are investigating this issue to understand the contributing factors and consider how this could be resolved. The AI3 has seen increases in flow in both directions but both are marginal at one per cent eastbound and three per cent westbound.

Traffic flows on an average weekend show similar patterns to the weekdays, with the exception of the AI3 eastbound, which has seen slightly higher flows than during the week. This mirrors the improved conditions seen on weekdays, which enable more free-flow journeys.

2%

decrease in northbound traffic on the AI2 on weekdays

Stable traffic flow has been observed on the A2, AI2 and AI3

Average daily distance travelled on key corridors (km) – weekdays

Average daily increase/decrease in distance travelled (%) – weekdays

A12 Inbound	-1%
A12 Outbound	-2%
A13 Inbound	1%
A13 Outbound	3%
A2 Inbound	3%
A2 Outbound	-5%

Comparing current and pre-opening traffic flows on the key corridors shows traffic flow has broadly remained consistent since the Silvertown Tunnel has opened. This is reflected by the percentage change figures that are shown in the table on the right.

Journey time compared to 2024/25 data on weekdays only

Tower Bridge

Peak	% change (2024/25 vs 2025/26)	
	Tower Bridge northbound	Tower Bridge southbound
Morning (06:00 to 10:00)	-1.9%	-5.8%
Interpeak (10:00 to 16:00)	0.0%	-4.7%
Evening (16:00 to 19:00)	4.3%	-4.1%
Full day (06:00 to 19:00)	0.4%	-4.9%

Blackwall

Peak	% change (2024/25 vs 2025/26)	
	Blackwall northbound	Blackwall southbound
Morning (06:00 to 10:00)	-12.8%	-2.4%
Interpeak (10:00 to 16:00)	-19.0%	-6.9%
Evening (16:00 to 19:00)	-14.6%	-14.4%
Full day (06:00 to 19:00)	-16.1%	-7.7%

Rotherhithe

Peak	% change (2024/25 vs 2025/26)	
	Rotherhithe northbound	Rotherhithe southbound
Morning (06:00 to 10:00)	2.8%	14.6%
Interpeak (10:00 to 16:00)	4.9%	15.9%
Evening (16:00 to 19:00)	6.9%	20.2%
Full day (6:00 to 19:00)	4.7%	16.5%

Blackwall Tunnel approaches

Peak	% change (2024/25 vs 2025/26)	
	Sun in the Sands to Blackwall northbound	Bow Interchange to Blackwall northbound
Morning (06:00 to 10:00)	-58%	-10%
Interpeak (10:00 to 16:00)	-39%	-22%
Evening (16:00 to 19:00)	-47%	-43%
Full day (06:00 to 19:00)	-48%	-26%

Journey times

The improved performance of the road network at the Blackwall Tunnel approaches has been maintained and there continues to be significantly less congestion. On the northbound approach, in both peaks compared to 2024/25, there has been a reduction in journey times. Journey times northbound between Sun in the Sands and the Blackwall Tunnel have seen an average reduction of 58 per cent during morning peak times and 47 per cent in evening peak times. This improved performance is also reflected in improved speeds, with journeys in the morning peak period now 126 per cent faster from Sun in the Sands to the Blackwall Tunnel and 70 per cent faster southbound between Bow roundabout and the Blackwall Tunnel. These sections of road were previously well-known congestion hotspots before the Silvertown Tunnel opened. The opening of the Silvertown Tunnel is therefore making a meaningful difference to journey times for those who need to use this crossing at the busiest times.

At the adjacent crossings, performance at Tower Bridge has improved, with reduced journey times in all time periods southbound. In the northbound direction, journey times have slightly increased in the evening peak but there has been a slight reduction in the morning peak and no change during the daytime. At the Rotherhithe Tunnel, the picture is more complex due to the issues with key operating systems. This is having an impact on journey times across all time periods, but the impact is much greater on southbound journeys. There are improvement works under way at Rotherhithe Tunnel but we will continue to monitor this situation closely.

Journey times are significantly improved at the busiest times

Looking at the average journey times for all roads within the Silvertown Tunnel area of influence, these show a slight reduction compared to pre-opening. This means that traffic speeds and journey time reliability have improved across a wider area, meaning even those who do not use the Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnels are benefiting from the new crossing.

For the key traffic routes to the Blackwall Tunnel and neighbouring river crossings, average weekday journey times at most times of day have seen improvements. On the A2 northbound, across the full day, journey times are now on average 12.4 per cent quicker than the previous year. The A12 southbound similarly shows an eight per cent improvement and the A13 westbound shows a 3.6 per cent improvement. For the opposing directions, journey times are marginally slower but there are still improvements in the morning peak for the A2 southbound and A13 eastbound.

Traffic using the A206, the approach to the Woolwich Ferry, shows slight increases in journey times in most time periods. However, this area is also being impacted by the ongoing construction of Cycleway 4, which started in summer 2025 and will continue until 2027. We will continue to monitor this closely.

Local traffic

Away from the key corridors, we continue to closely monitor traffic changes in local areas to understand if there have been any unexpected impacts. Local traffic is adjusting to the reduced congestion on the A102 corridor, which previously meant there was frequent queuing and accessing the Woolwich Road from the A102 was difficult. The Greenwich Low Traffic Neighbourhood scheme in West and East Greenwich was also introduced earlier in 2025, at a similar time to the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel. On the north side of the river, improvement works in the Royal Docks area have continued, with the Silvertown Way flyover being closed westbound on the approach to Tidal Basin Roundabout from May to November 2025.

Cross-river resilience improvements

Before the Silvertown Tunnel opened, the Blackwall Tunnel experienced around 700 unplanned closures each year. Given the volume of traffic using this crossing daily, a six-minute closure could result in three-mile tailbacks and delays of up to 20 minutes.

The Silvertown Tunnel was designed to accommodate taller vehicles than the Blackwall Tunnel to help boost cross-river resilience for road journeys. Over the first year of Silvertown Tunnel operation, there has been a 23 per cent reduction in the number of unplanned closures due to overheight vehicles at the Blackwall Tunnel.

The value of this additional resilience is felt across the entire east London river crossing network. Between October 2025 and April 2026, Riverlinx recorded 68 incidences when they used congestion management plans to mitigate the impact of incidents at the Blackwall Tunnel and Dartford Crossing. These incidents have included emergency closures and broken-down vehicles, as well as supporting planned maintenance closures. The additional capacity provided by the Silvertown Tunnel has meant traffic was able to continue to cross the river with minimal impact, helping to prevent the previous major gridlock that drivers often experienced in east London.

In summary, the traffic impacts continue to be in line with our expectations set before its opening. These include reducing congestion while not generating significant additional demand, decreasing the frequency of unplanned closures, as well as boosting resilience at the Blackwall Tunnel if closures are required. We will continue to monitor these outcomes closely as the monitoring period progresses and wider benefits start to be realised.

12.4%

quicker journeys on average on the A2 northbound, compared to last year

23%

reduction in number of closures due to overheight vehicles at the Blackwall Tunnel

Public and active transport

We aim to improve cross-river journey opportunities by bus and cycling as well as other local journeys

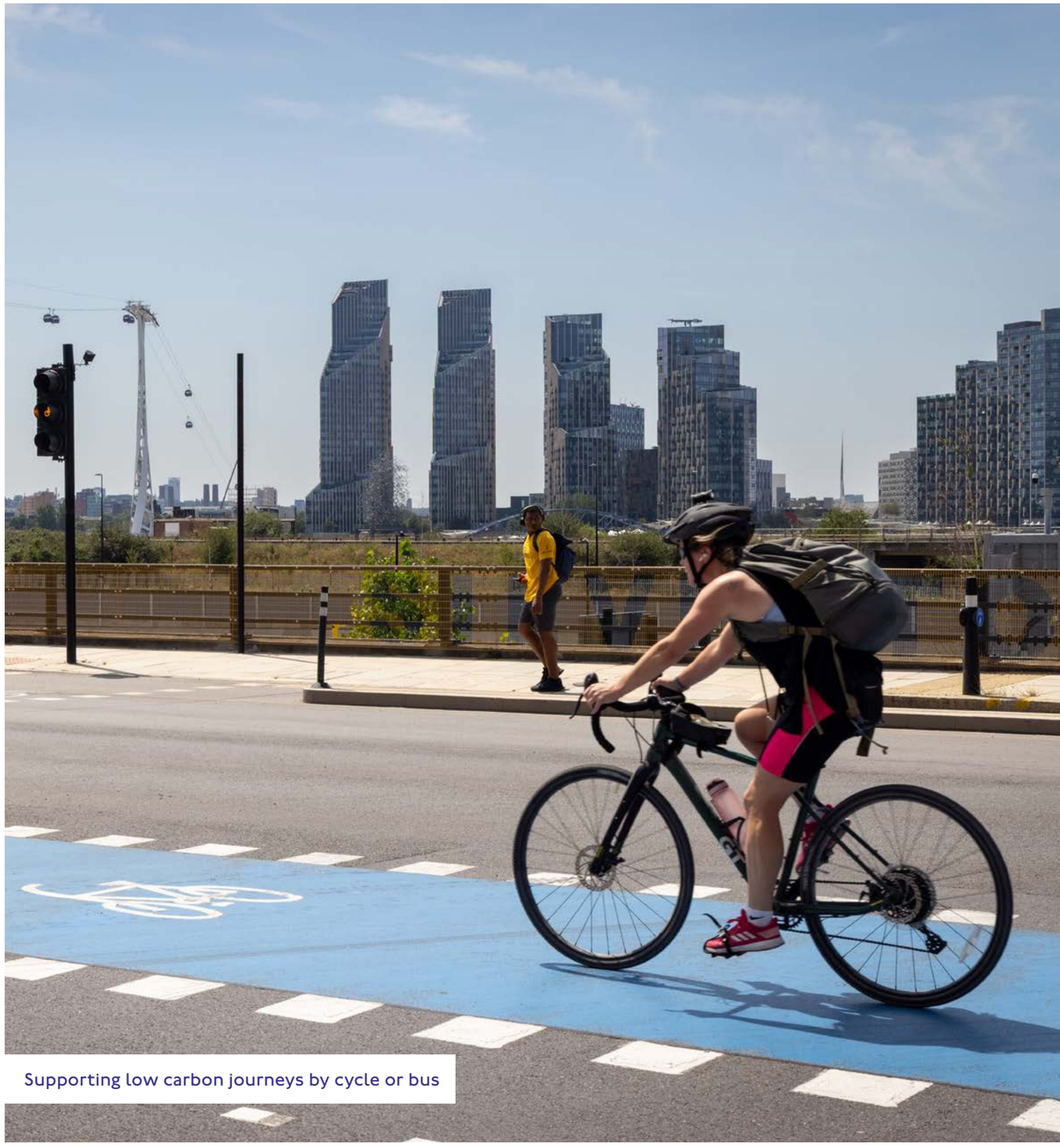
Project objectives

PO3: to support economic and population growth, in particular in east and southeast London by providing improved cross-river transport links.

Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network

The opening of the Silvertown Tunnel has enabled us to introduce a significantly enhanced higher capacity and increased frequency cross-river bus network in east London. The Victorian era northbound Blackwall Tunnel could not be used by double-deck buses and was also a persistent source of congestion linked to overheight vehicle incidents which caused hundreds of unplanned closures each year. This led to unreliable journeys times on route 108, the only bus service to cross the river in this area, as well as for commuter coaches linking Kent and London.

The Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network increased the frequency of services across the river from six to 21 services per hour at the busiest times between 07:00 and 19:00 Monday to Friday. This included double-deck buses for the first time, with all the new services being zero-emission at the tailpipe. All routes also benefit from new bus priority measures, which enable quicker journeys to North Greenwich bus station via dedicated slip roads for buses. Between 7 April 2025 and 26 May 2026, all journeys on buses in the new bus network were free.



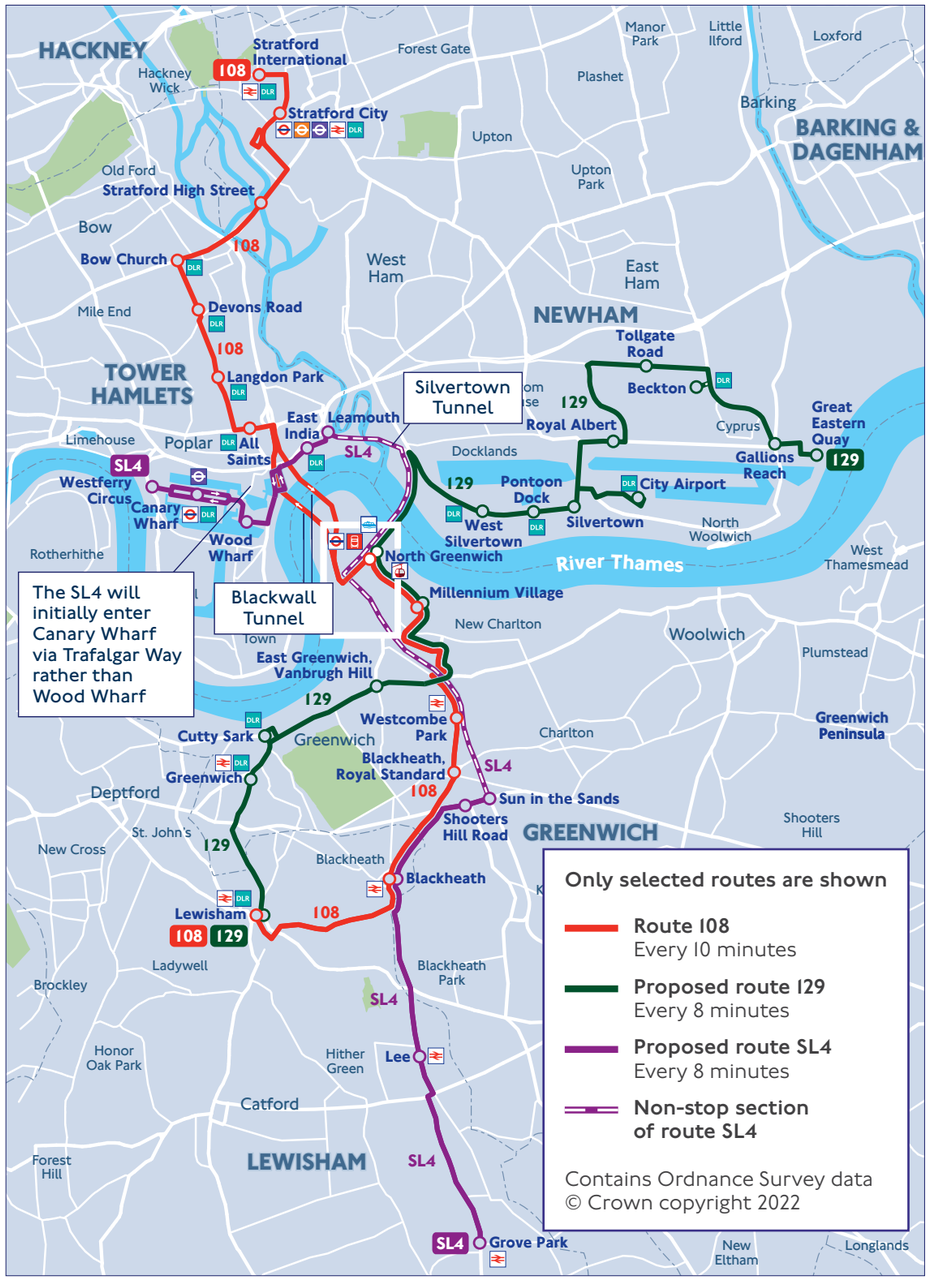
Supporting low carbon journeys by cycle or bus

More than 30,000 journeys are now made on three routes (108, 129 and SL4) on an average day, of which more than 10,000 are crossing the river. This means that more than 11 per cent of trips through the tunnels are now made by bus. This is more than a 290 per cent increase compared to before the tunnel opened. The growth in the number of trips by bus during the first year demonstrates how travel habits are starting to change and new sustainable cross-river travel behaviours become embedded long term.

290%

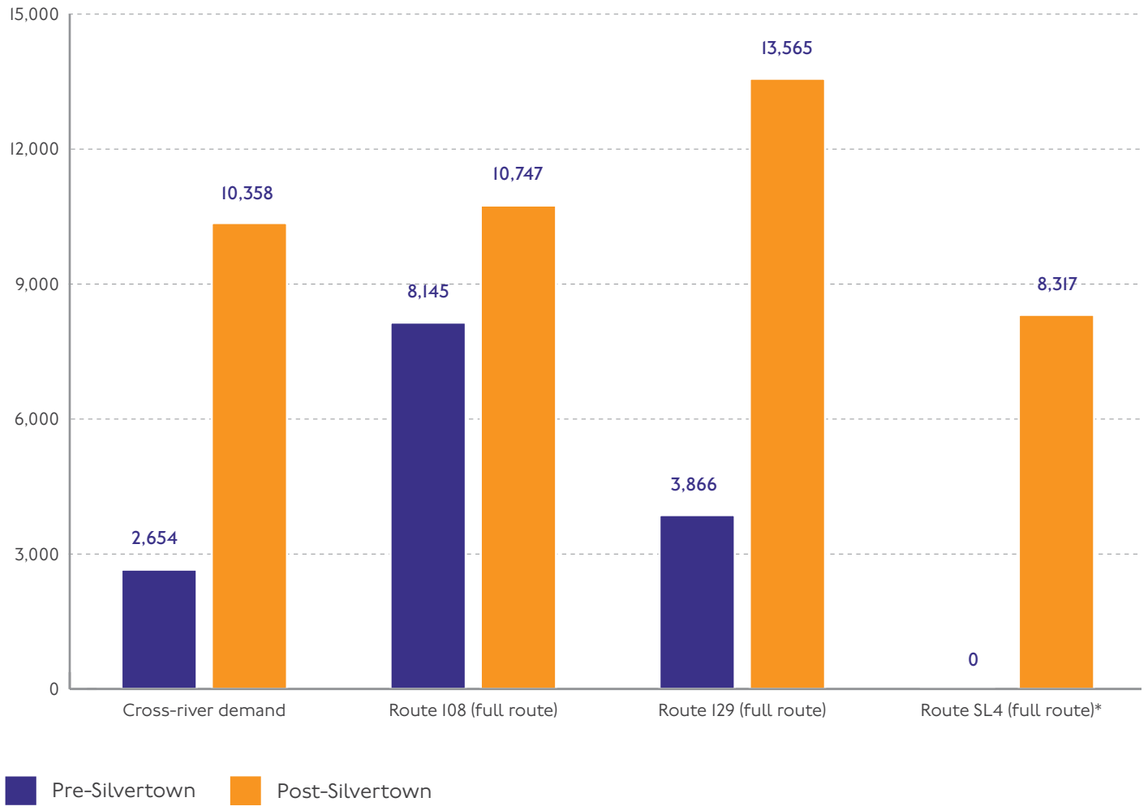
increase in trips made by bus through the Silvertown Tunnel

Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnels bus routes



Bus priority measures facilitate cross-river bus services

Average weekday demand on bus routes through Silvertown and Blackwall tunnels (number of journeys)



Focus on the three routes in the network

Route 129 was an existing service that was significantly extended when the Silvertown Tunnel opened. The route now terminates across the river at Gallions Reach, Great Eastern Quay, providing a cross-river link and an enhanced bus service to the Royal Docks and the new residential developments in the area. With the new route, there has been huge growth in customer demand over the year compared to the baseline before opening. Passenger numbers on route 129 are now around 210 per cent higher than before the tunnel opened, with consistent growth in demand throughout the year.

Route 108 was an existing route before the Silvertown Tunnel opened and continues to operate between Stratford International and Lewisham via the Blackwall Tunnel.

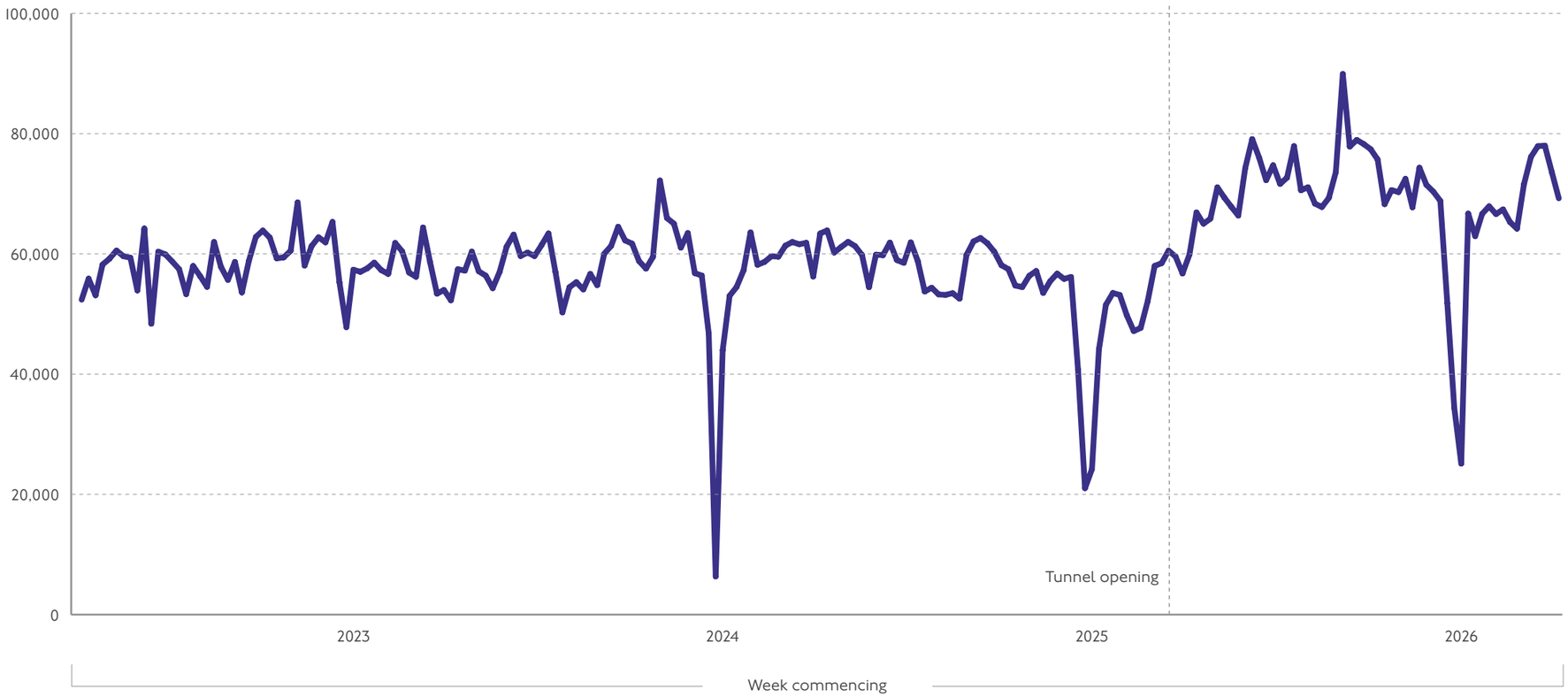
It was previously consistently one of the most unreliable bus routes in London owing to the impact of congestion at the Blackwall Tunnel on the service. However, since the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel, we have seen a 28 per cent decrease in excess wait time** across the entire route in Quarter 4 2026, when compared to Quarter 4 2025.

Journey times through the tunnel segment northbound have also consistently been at least 2.5 minutes faster in each quarter since the Silvertown Tunnel opened. Customer demand has responded to these improvements, with the first year of operations seeing passenger numbers rise to around 20 per cent higher than the baseline of the previous three years.

* Route SL4 launched on the same day that the Silvertown Tunnel opened

** Excess wait time is a metric that captures the average additional waiting time which passengers experience when waiting for each bus route, relative to the scheduled waiting time. Lower excess wait time values indicate a better and more reliable service

Bus 108 demand change – tap count



SL4 is the final of the original Superloop routes to launch, linking Grove Park and Canary Wharf, and it has also proved a success. Average weekday journeys have risen from 2,360 customers per day in July 2025 to 8,300 by March this year, with a particular spike in demand during the September 2025 Tube strikes. The steady growth in demand over the first year shows the route aligns to previously unmet customer needs, with the rate of growth similar to other new Superloop services.

In terms of service reliability, actual excess wait time on Route SL4 has been consistently low, indicating that the service is operating well and not being delayed excessively on route.

Overall, all routes are operating well, particularly in the cross-river segment that previously caused delays. However, construction works in Lewisham and the Royal Docks have been causing unrelated traffic issues which are impacting reliability elsewhere. We will continue to monitor these closely and work with bus operators to minimise the impact.

Other buses route improvements in the area

In addition to the bus routes that run through the tunnels themselves, the reduction in congestion since the tunnel opened has also impacted other bus routes in the area. While bus route reliability is affected by multiple sources, journey time reliability has improved for several routes adjacent to the Blackwall Tunnel. Routes 132 and 330 have shown improvements in performance compared to 2024/25 in most periods and are now operating close to the excess wait time standard set by our Bus Operations team. This year, we have also seen improved excess wait time on route 381, which operates close to the Rotherhithe Tunnel.

These bus improvements highlight how changes in traffic at the Blackwall Tunnel have potential to positively impact bus journeys further afield, and that the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel is in turn delivering benefits across the wider area.

The future of the cross-river bus network

As with all London bus routes, we are keeping the bus services through the tunnels under review to make sure the service provision is adequate for the level of customer demand. While passenger numbers on the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network have been consistently growing throughout the first year, there are no current capacity issues on any route.

Excess wait time is also manageable on each route, which suggests there are no significant reliability issues. Therefore, we are not proposing any changes to the number of routes or frequency of routes in the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network at this time but will continue to keep services under close review as the new network becomes established and fares begin to be applied.

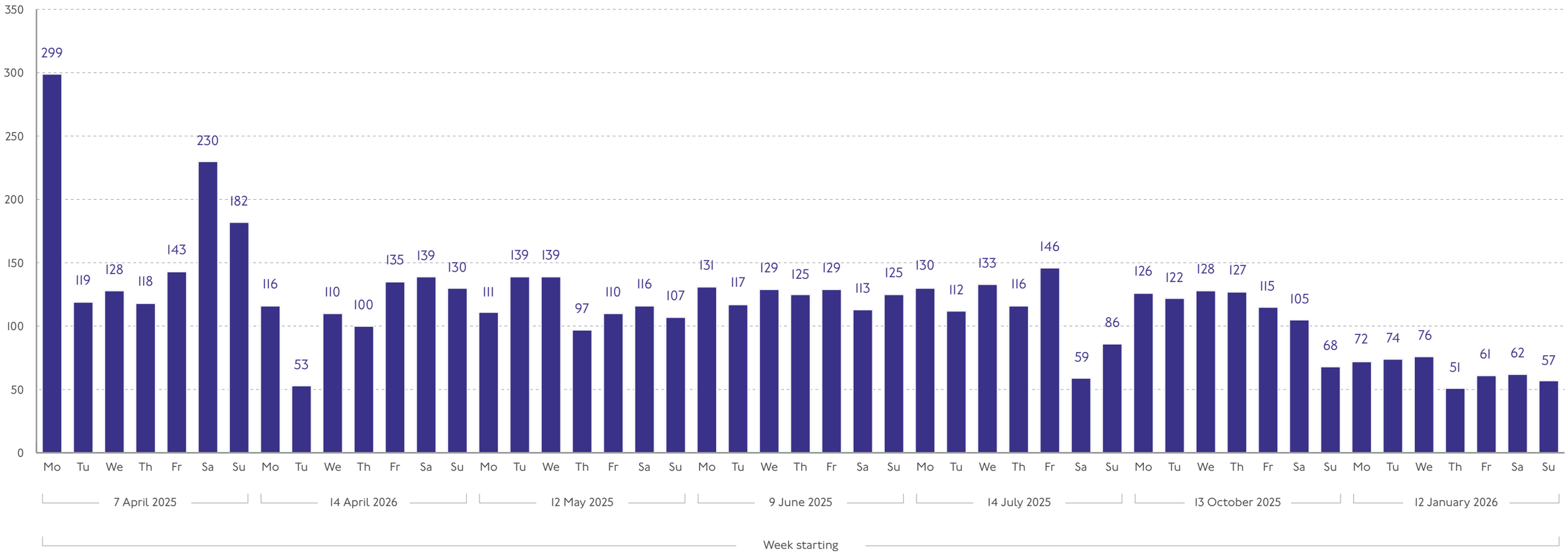
Silvertown Tunnel cycle shuttle

We launched the Silvertown Tunnel cycle shuttle on the same day the Silvertown Tunnel opened, running from 06:30 until 21:30 every day apart from Christmas Day. It was launched as a free service for the first year and in February 2026 it was confirmed that it would remain free for the foreseeable future. The cycle shuttle vehicle is zero-emission at the tailpipe.

Typically, between 100 and 130 trips were made every weekday on the service from April to October 2025, with an expected dip in demand seen over the winter in January 2026 owing to poor weather conditions for cycling. Our data suggests that the service is most popular with users of conventional cycles, although there is growing demand for e-bikes, including hired cycles, in line with wider trends seen across London.

To maximise the opportunities provided by the cycle shuttle service, we are currently exploring the opportunity to allow pedestrians to use the service.

Cycle shuttle service usage*



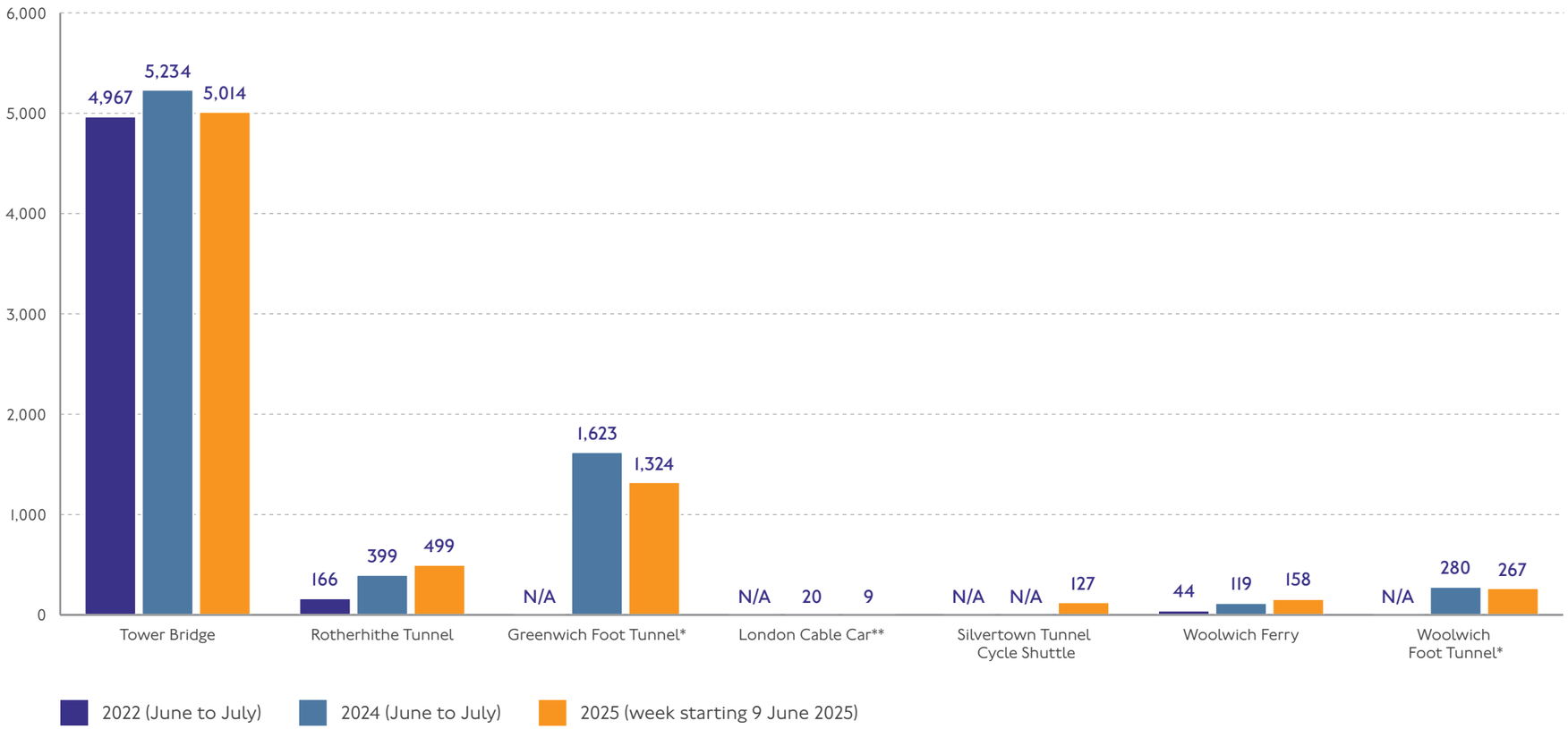
* Due to the unique nature of the service and customers not being required to use a payment card to board, we do not have continuous data for the Silvertown Tunnel cycle shuttle service. Data is instead collected via reoccurring survey waves (one full week of counts at a time). The latest data for the first year of operation is from January 2026

Cycling at nearby river crossings

In June 2025 we undertook a first wave of cycle counts across all east London river crossings to assess whether the Silvertown Tunnel had redistributed cross-river cycling demand. This data showed that after eight weeks of operation, demand for the Silvertown Tunnel cycle shuttle was similar to the Woolwich Ferry, at 127 and 158 cycles per day, respectively. This is significantly higher than the demand observed at the London Cable Car, which is the only other option to cross the Thames by cycle between the Greenwich Peninsula and the Royal Docks area. This suggests that the new cycle shuttle is a helpful addition to the cycling infrastructure in the area.

These counts on nearby river crossings will be repeated each year of the monitoring period to support our assessment of the next steps for the cycle shuttle service after the initial period of operation, which ends in April 2028.

Parallel crossing cycle demand



Other active travel improvements

In addition to the cycle shuttle, we installed a new walking and cycling bridge at Boord Street, providing an improved active travel link over the A102. Cyclists using this bridge have more than doubled compared to 2024, and there has also been a 28 per cent increase in pedestrians. With new developments being built adjacent to this bridge, it is expected these figures will continue to rise as the area evolves over the monitoring period.

There is also better provision for people walking and cycling. The redesigned Tidal Basin roundabout at the northern tunnel portal provides new cycle lanes and an improved walking environment.

* At the time of the 2025 counts, the north lift on each tunnel was out of service

** This data is for 24 hours, not only the Silvertown Tunnel cycle shuttle operating hours

Social and environmental impacts of the scheme

Examining how the scheme has improved outcomes for local residents

Project objectives

PO5: to minimise any adverse impacts of any proposals on communities, health, safety and the environment.

PO6: to ensure where possible that any proposals are acceptable in principle to key stakeholders, including affected boroughs.

Public transport concessions

To support the tunnel opening and meet our Development Consent Order commitments to local residents, we put in place a package of measures to encourage public transport journeys and ensure that local residents could benefit from the new tunnel. We committed to at least one year of free bus travel on the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network. This consisted of an extension to the route 129 bus and the introduction of the new Superloop 4 (SL4) between Canary Wharf and Grove Park, both of which use the Silvertown Tunnel, and the route 108 bus which uses the Blackwall Tunnel. The package also included cross-river DLR trips between Woolwich Arsenal and King George V, and between Greenwich/ Cutty Sark and Island Gardens, which were refunded for the first year. On 20 February 2026, we announced that this free travel would be extended until 26 May 2026 when this offer ended.

Over the first year of operation, thousands of Londoners benefited from these free and refunded travel offers. On an average week, we refunded 5,025 DLR journeys, with more than 265,000 journeys refunded over the whole year. With the free bus journeys, more than 10 million journeys benefited from this offer over the same time period. We will continue to closely monitor demand on the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network now the free travel concession has ended, however we hope the concession has helped embed new sustainable cross-river travel behaviour in the long term.

We provided one year of free bus travel for local residents

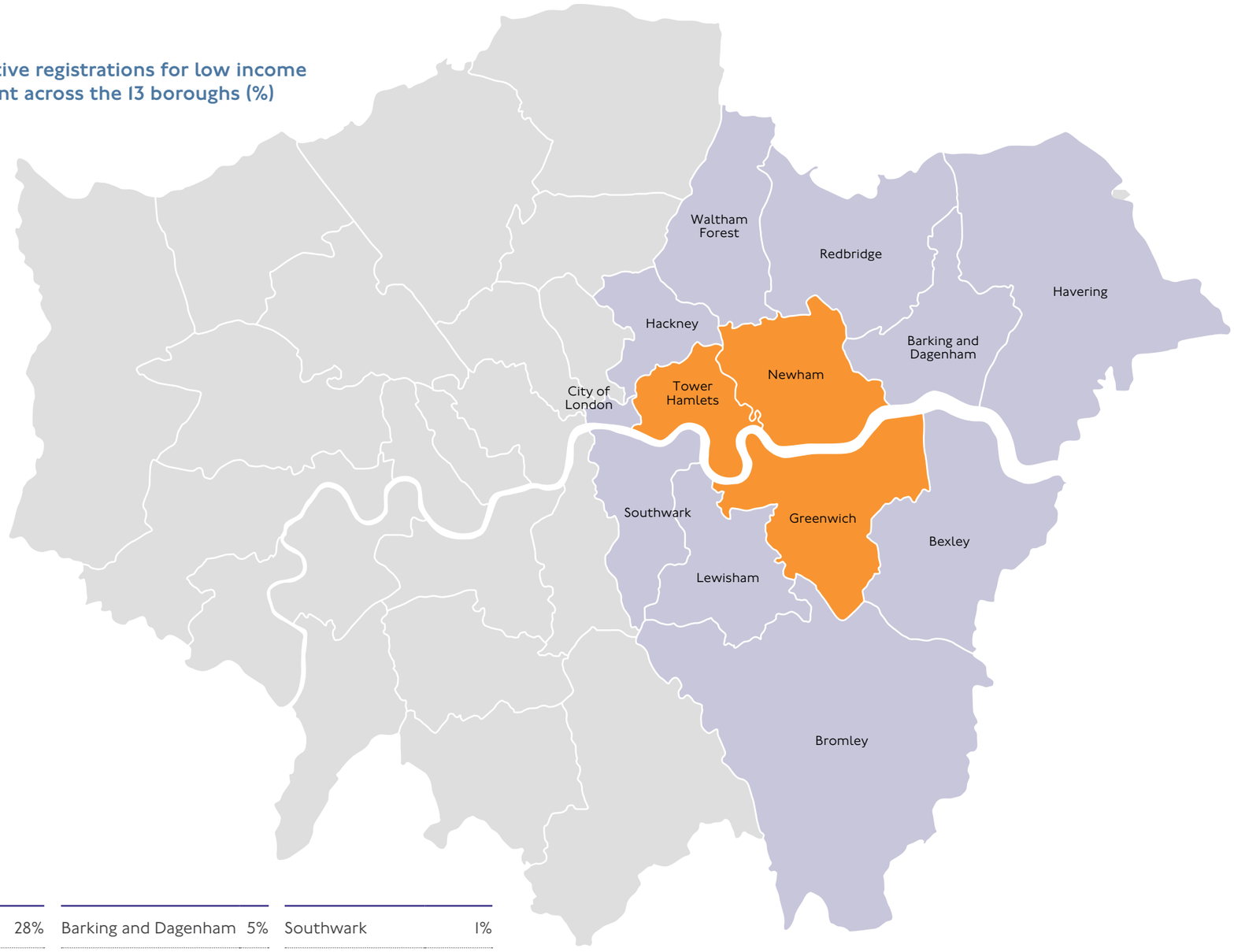
User charge discounts and exemptions

In addition to the public transport concessions, a package of discounts to help residents and businesses adapt to the new user charges was also available. The east London low-income residents' discount is being provided for at least three years offering a 50 per cent discount on the user charges for those living in one of 13 east and southeast London boroughs and in receipt of certain benefits.*

By March 2026, there were almost 4,200 residents registered for the low-income resident discount. Around two-thirds of the residents registered for the discount were from the three host London boroughs closest to the two tunnels (Tower Hamlets, Newham and Greenwich), with Tower Hamlets having the largest total number of residents registered.

* The 13 London Boroughs are Barking and Dagenham, Bexley, Bromley, City of London Corporation, Greenwich, Hackney, Havering, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest. The applicable benefits are the Carer's Allowance, Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Income-related Employment and Support Allowance, Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support, Universal Credit, State Pension Credit, Working Tax Credit

Proportion of active registrations for low income residents' discount across the 13 boroughs (%)



Key

Tower Hamlets	28%	Barking and Dagenham	5%	Southwark	1%
Newham	21%	Bexley	5%	Havering	1%
Greenwich	18%	Redbridge	4%	City of London**	0%
Lewisham	6%	Waltham Forest	3%	Host boroughs	
Hackney	5%	Bromley	2%	Eligible boroughs	

** It should be noted that due to the low number of residents, the City of London figures have rounded down to zero percent, but there have been successful applications

For businesses, the business discount enables eligible small businesses, sole traders and charities based in the host boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Greenwich to register up to three vehicles to receive a £1 discount on standard off-peak charges. Over the first year of the scheme, almost 1,300 vehicles from 863 businesses have registered for the discount.

The low-income residents and business discounts will both be available until at least April 2028, with registrations for both discounts continuing to increase. The business discount is linked to a requirement to provide £1m for a user charge discount to eligible local small businesses and sole traders in the boroughs of Greenwich, Newham and Tower Hamlets. The discount is also available to eligible local charities.

The opening of the Silvertown Tunnel has also encouraged more customers to register for existing discounts, particularly the Blue Badge discount. This offers a 100 per cent Blue Badge discount for the Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels as well as the Congestion Charge. Since pre-registration for the new tunnel specific discounts opened on 27 January 2025, registrations for the Blue Badge discount have increased each month, with the total number of registrations now 14.3 per cent higher than before.

1,300

vehicles from 863 businesses have registered for the discount over the first year

Socioeconomic impacts

Our first socioeconomic surveys after the Silvertown Tunnel opened took place in autumn 2025, six months after the scheme opened. While socioeconomic indicators usually take longer to respond to changes, the early outcomes from our monitoring suggest there is a positive response to the scheme opening. Among businesses, perceptions of journey predictability have improved, with a 41 per cent point decrease in the number of businesses surveyed who felt journey time predictability was poor. Around two in five businesses also reported the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel has made cross-river travel easier. For residents, eight per cent reported making new cross-river trips they did not previously make, demonstrating the potential for the tunnel to provide access to new journey possibilities and impact travel behaviour.

The tunnels are located close to three of the most active opportunity areas in London: the Greenwich Peninsula, Royal Docks and the Isle of Dogs. Across these there is potential to provide up to 82,300 new homes and 180,700 new jobs, a huge contribution to London's economy and housing. The previous traffic congestion and resilience issues threatened the viability of developing the area.

An example of one site now unlocked for development is Thameside West, which is located on the former tunnel worksite for the northern portal of the tunnel. More than 5,000 homes could be built here, as well as a new DLR station at Thames Wharf. We are working closely with the developer Arada, the GLA and the London Borough of Newham to develop proposals and agree a funding and delivery strategy, with construction expected to start in 2028/29.

Air quality improvements

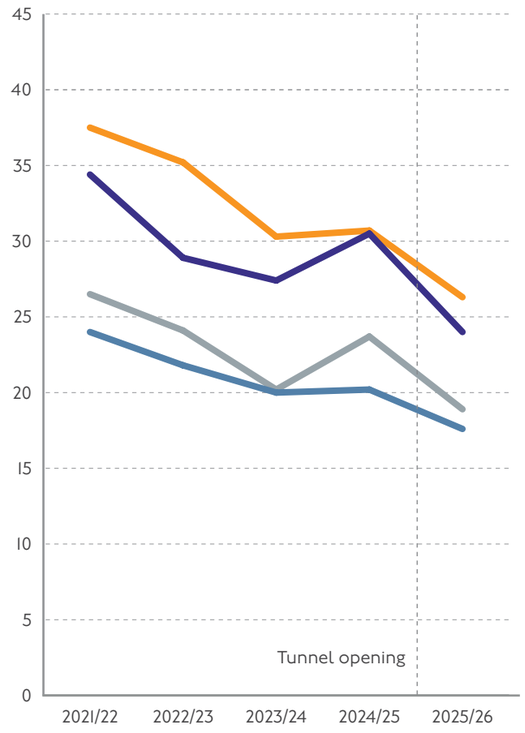
The user charges are the principal means of mitigating adverse environmental impacts which could be caused by the new tunnel. Consequently, managing the impact on air quality and the environment was a key consideration when setting the user charge levels in December 2024.

Since December 2020, we have been monitoring air quality, specifically nitrogen dioxide, to ensure the impacts of the Silvertown Tunnel are fully understood. This data is compared to the UK Air Quality Strategy (AQS) objective values set out at the Development Consent Order, which are 40 microgrammes per cubic metre annually and 200 microgrammes per cubic metre hourly not to be exceeded for more than 18 hours across the each year. The air quality monitoring network includes 38 diffusion tubes and four continuous monitoring stations across five boroughs: Greenwich, Newham, Tower Hamlets, Southwark and Lewisham.

Without the Silvertown Tunnel, congestion and air quality around the Blackwall Tunnel were predicted to get worse. This was due to both increases in London's population as well as the chronic daily congestion experienced at the Blackwall Tunnel, which contributed to widespread delays across south and east London. Our baseline data reflects how air quality in London has been improving since we were granted permission to build the Silvertown Tunnel. This follows the introduction of measures to improve air quality as laid out in the Mayor's Transport Strategy, including the London-wide expansion of the Ultra-Low Emission Zone (ULEZ).

Nitrogen dioxide concentrations are much lower

Change in annual mean NO_2 concentration (µg/m3) over the monitoring period at continuous sites



Data from the four continuous monitoring sites shows annual nitrogen dioxide concentrations measured since tunnel opening continue to be significantly below the annual mean AQS objective values, with the highest concentration being 26.3 microgrammes per cubic metre. Compared to the year prior to the scheme opening, nitrogen dioxide concentrations are, on average, 17 per cent lower, showing the scheme is continuing in line with the trajectory of improving air quality in this part of London and ensuring more Londoners breathe clean air.

Diffusion tube monitoring locations also reflect this trend and show levels of nitrogen dioxide are again well below the AQS objective values, with a maximum concentration of 31.5 microgrammes per cubic metre and there are no locations where nitrogen dioxide concentrations exceed the AQS objective values. The diffusion tube monitoring also demonstrates less pronounced peaks in nitrogen dioxide concentrations, suggesting short-term nitrogen dioxide build ups during rush hours are relatively low compared to previous years.

Scheme opening – NO_2 diffusion

Site name	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26*
3 Washington Close, Tower Hamlets					
Tynne Court on A12 Blackwall Tunnel, Tower Hamlets					
Douglas Road, Newham Way, Newham					
1041 Newham Way, Newham					
Strait Road/3 Campion Close, Newham					
Hanameel Street/North Woolwich Road, Newham					
John Wilson Street/St Mary Street, Greenwich					
Southern Way, Greenwich					
Westcombe Hill/Westerdale Road, Greenwich					
Sun-in-the-Sands, Greenwich					
311 Prince Regent Lane, Newham					
Robin Hood Lane, Tower Hamlets					
46 Ming Street, Tower Hamlets					
East Parkside, Greenwich					
45 Siebert Road, Greenwich					
Switch House, Tower Hamlets					
East India Dock Road, Tower Hamlets					
13 College Approach, Greenwich					
8 Silvertown Way, Newham					

Site name	2021-22	2022-23	2023-24	2024-25	2025-26*
68 Lower Road, Southwark					
Evelyn Street, Lewisham					
85 Evelyn Street, Lewisham					
43 Rotherhithe Old Road, Southwark					
A2 Blackheath Hill, Greenwich					
Old Kent Road, Southwark					
Lower Road, Southwark					
1 Silvertown Way, Newham					
Lanrick Road, Tower Hamlets					
Deptford Church Street, Lewisham					
Hoola Tower – 3 Tidal Basin Road, Newham					
Hoola Tower – 3 Tidal Basin Road, Newham					
Hoola Tower – 3 Tidal Basin Road, Newham					
Hoola Tower – 3 Tidal Basin Road, Newham					
Hoola Tower – 3 Tidal Basin Road, Newham					
Hoola Tower – 3 Tidal Basin Road, Newham					
Tunnel Avenue, Greenwich					
Hoola Tower – 3 Tidal Basin Road, Newham					
Britannia Gate/Silvertown Way, Newham					

Key: Annual mean NO_2 (µg/m3)

40-45 35-40 30-35 25-30 20-25 15-20

* Scheme opening

Moreover, Silvertown Tunnel air quality monitoring sites measured even lower concentrations of nitrogen dioxide than the average of other Inner London Roadside sites.* While the same declining trend over time is observed across other inner London roadside sites, the overall concentrations close to Silvertown are also lower. This again reflects a trend of improving air quality linked to a flattening of rush hour peaks.

Overall, the trends in both continuous monitoring and diffusion tube data show that measured nitrogen dioxide concentrations have been declining over the last five years. This decline has continued now the Silvertown Tunnel is operational. This means that air quality levels are well below the relevant annual mean AQS objective, and local communities that live close to the tunnels are breathing cleaner air than before the scheme was approved, in line with what we committed to when the Development Consent Order was approved.

As differentiating between the effects on air quality from the scheme itself and the effects arising from other, unrelated activities is complex, we have appointed an independent air quality expert to review the air quality monitoring data. Independent expert review has confirmed they agree there has been no material worsening in air quality as a result of the scheme.

Given the transboundary nature of PM2.5 and the need to understand it across London as a region, the levels will not be reported in direct relation to the scheme. However, our ULEZ one year report from March 2025 shows that PM2.5 exhaust emissions from cars and vans are reducing in London as a whole, with the London-wide ULEZ expansion being the biggest driver of this change. As can be seen in the Supporting Documents – Concentrations for the ULEZ one year report, the PM2.5 annual mean across London has reduced by 18.6 per cent between 2021 and 2024 (from 10.2 microgrammes per cubic metre to 8.3 microgrammes per cubic metre).

Wider environmental benefits

We have also been monitoring ambient noise to understand any impacts from traffic noise in the areas close to the new tunnel. Since construction activity creates noise, the pre-opening baseline for noise data is based on 15 months of noise monitoring completed in 2019-20.

Comparing with the baseline data from 2019-2020, noise levels continue to be very similar. Noise from traffic passing through the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel is also lower than what was predicted in the Development Consent Order. Again, an independent noise expert has reviewed these results to ensure they are distinguished from noise arising from other unrelated activities. The independent expert agrees there has been no material worsening in noise levels as a result of the scheme.

We introduced more than 31,000 metres squared of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) to drain impermeable areas via attenuation tanks alongside oil and silt interceptors. This is the largest SuDS scheme in London to date and helps support climate adaptation of the existing network and boost resilience.

We have also planted greenery to enhance biodiversity around the tunnel and make the site a more pleasant space for walking, wheeling and cycling. On the Greenwich side, we planted trees and shrubs close to the Boord Street bridge and southern tunnel approaches, helping to screen the A102 from local communities. At Tidal Basin roundabout by the northern tunnel terminus, we have planted native wildflower meadows, using recycled substrates rather than importing new topsoil.

31,000

metres squared of Sustainable Drainage Systems (SuDS) have been introduced to the area

* Average of 65 sites across inner London. Full list included in the 2025 Air Quality Monitoring report

Silvertown and Blackwall tunnels user charges

Understanding the user charge, compliance and our review of the charge levels

Project objectives

PO7: to achieve value for money and, through road user charging, to manage congestion.

User charging

User charges have applied to both the Blackwall and Silvertown tunnels since the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel. The user charges apply between 06:00 and 22:00 every day, except Christmas Day. There is a peak rate during the busiest times which is northbound between 06:00 and 10:00, and southbound between 16:00 and 19:00. These user charges are necessary to achieve the project objectives.

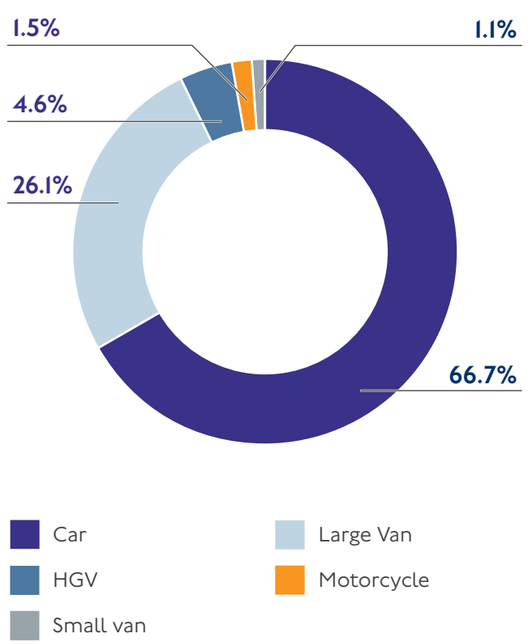
The initial charges were set following consultation with the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group, the public and stakeholders in summer 2024. The TfL Finance Committee is responsible for approving any future changes to the user charges, discounts and exemptions.

The primary purpose of the user charge is to manage traffic demand for the river crossings. This supports the scheme to effectively manage other impacts – principally environmental and social impacts – and help it meet its project objectives. A secondary reason for the user charges is to help pay for the design and construction of the Silvertown Tunnel and the ongoing operation and maintenance of both the Silvertown and Blackwall tunnels.

Charges by vehicle type

Cars and large vans continue to represent almost 93 per cent of all charges paid to travel through the tunnels. There has been very little change in the composition of traffic over the first year of operations, which suggests the user charge levels are set at an appropriate level for all vehicle types. The average number of crossings per liable private vehicle per day is 1.7 trips. Certain vehicles such as buses and coaches are exempt from the charges and these are listed in Appendix B.

Charges by vehicle type (%)



Method of payment

Customers have the option of paying via Auto Pay, which they can register for in advance to automatically charge them when they travel through the tunnels. This includes Fleet Auto Pay for businesses, and enables drivers to benefit from the lower off-peak charges. It is free to register and avoids the risk of receiving a penalty charge notice for non-payment. Alternatively, payments can be made via Pay to Drive without the need to register for an account, but customers will be charged peak charges at all times.

Most customers use Auto Pay, which also applies to other road user charging schemes in London, such as the Congestion Charge or Ultra Low Emission Zone. Over the first year, trips paid for via Auto Pay including Fleet Auto Pay, increased from around 75 per cent in April 2025 to 86 per cent of trips in March 2026.

More than 3.6 million vehicles are now signed up for Auto Pay, which is up from around 2.65 million in January 2025. This follows the announcement of the confirmed charges in December 2024 by the TfL Board, including off-peak charges for those registered for Auto Pay and the opening of pre-registration for tunnels user charge discounts. This equates to a 42.6 per cent increase in account registrations, with most new accounts being for individuals rather than fleet operators. While the Auto Pay system is also used by other road user charging schemes, it is thought the introduction of tunnel user charging is the main driver behind this growth.

Our Auto Pay system automatically bills customers electronically

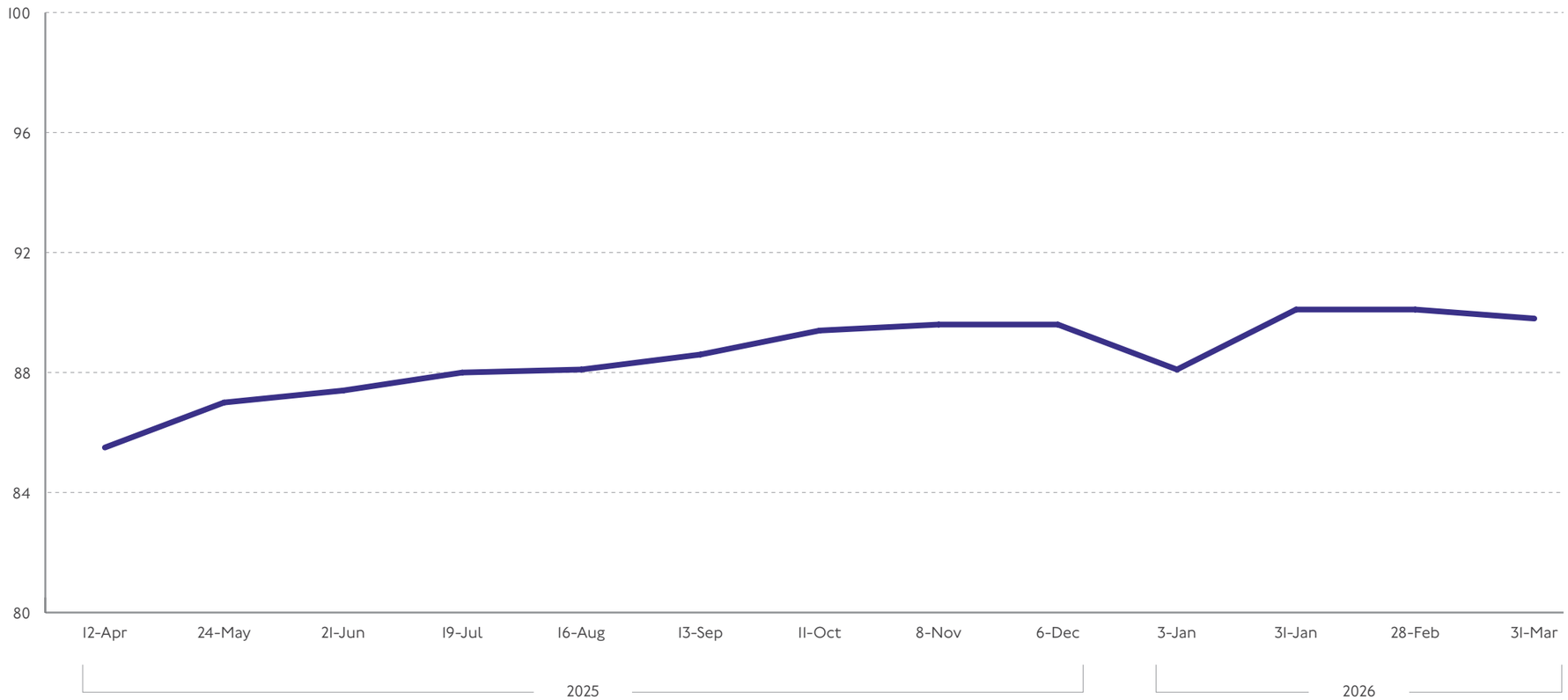
Compliance and enforcement

Compliance rates refer to the proportion of customers liable to pay the charge who do so in line with the charging schedule, namely those who are not exempt or registered for a 100 per cent discount.

Compliance steadily improved over the first months of the scheme and has now settled at around 90 per cent of customers either paying the charge or benefiting from a discount or exemption. A slight dip in compliance was seen around the festive period during December, which is likely linked to more drivers unfamiliar with the scheme using the tunnels. A similar pattern is seen for our other road user charging schemes.

To help customers get used to paying the tunnels user charges, we ran a warning notice campaign for the first 28 days of tunnel operation. Rather than a penalty charge notice, customers received a warning notice for their first contravention, with subsequent contraventions suppressed for 10 days following the issue of the warning notice. Since 30 April 2025 penalty charge notices have been issued to liable drivers who do not pay the charge. The number of penalty charge notices issued has steadily decreased since they began to be levied. The average daily penalty charge notices issued in March 2026 was 2,300, which is comparable to the Congestion Charge scheme.

Compliance and enforcement (average daily compliance)



Financial performance

Riverlinx delivered the Silvertown Tunnel after winning a competitive procurement process in 2019 to design, build, finance and maintain the tunnel. We selected a Private Finance Initiative to deliver the scheme. This provided best value by transferring appropriate construction and operational risks to a private partner, while ensuring timely delivery to defined cost and quality. The Private Finance Initiative also limited the impact on public finances by reducing the need for upfront public funding, as the costs are repaid over time by tunnel user charging revenue, and the vast majority of funding is raised by the Riverlinx consortium through private finance.

Now that the tunnel is open, Riverlinx operates the tunnel on our behalf. This arrangement will continue for the next 24 years until the contract ends in 2050.

The payments we make to Riverlinx are in the form of regular availability payments linked to their operational performance. Revenue from the user charges (and associated penalty charge payments) is the primary source used to fund these payments. In the first year, Riverlinx achieved an overall availability performance of 99.75 per cent. This demonstrates that the tunnel has been operated and maintained effectively since opening, delivering clear benefits to Londoners.

User charge revenue to date, including income from penalty charge notices, has been broadly in line with our financial planning assumptions. It has fully covered the availability payments due to Riverlinx and the costs associated with operating the charging regime, and has also contributed towards other costs related with the scheme, such as supporting the introduction of the Silvertown and Blackwall Tunnel bus network.

We expect these costs to continue to be fully met by user charge revenue over the medium term. Any surplus revenue will be reinvested in operating and improving London's public transport network.

Keeping the user charges under review

We are required to keep the user charges under review for the lifetime of the scheme, as set out in the Charging Policies and Procedures document. Once the scheme was operational for 12 months, we were required to review the user charges to assess whether they fit with our modelling forecasts and meet the project objectives.

We carried out this review in spring 2026 and shared our proposed response to the review with the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group in June 2026, who were able to make representations to inform our final decision.

The analysis presented in the user charge review report indicates the scheme is operating broadly as anticipated. We therefore do not propose to take any further action, such as change the user charges or investigate mitigations, as a result of the review.

Separate to the need to keep the user charges under review, our Changing Policies and Procedures document enables us to vary the user charge levels from time to time to account for inflation. This is done by using the Retail Price Index (RPI) as the relevant inflation indicator.

Based on the indexed changes in RPI between December 2024 (when the initial user charges were approved following consultation with Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group, public and other stakeholders) and March 2026, we have proposed an inflationary increase to the charges of 4.9 per cent. The new user charges were rounded,* which has meant the effective overall inflation rate has been 4.4 per cent, a below-inflation increase. The change in the user charge for car and small van drivers off-peak has been a five pence increase, for example.

In modelling the impacts of the user charges prior to their introduction, it was assumed that the user charges would rise in line with inflation to remain effective at managing demand and help achieve the objectives of the project.

Inflation is also factored into the level of our repayment to Riverlinx and it is therefore included in our long-term financial planning.

While our Charging Policies and Procedures document also enables us to increase associated penalty charge notices and registration fees in line with inflation, we did not propose doing so at this time.

We consulted Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group on the proposed inflationary increase to the user charges and their responses informed the decision by our Finance Committee to increase the charge levels in line with inflation. We have published a new Statement of Charges on our website which sets out the new, inflation adjusted charge levels that will apply from 21 September 2026.

* To the nearest five pence increment

Our next steps

We will continue to monitor and analyse the impacts of the scheme over at least the first three years of operation

Future monitoring

The monitoring period will continue until at least April 2028

This report summarises data and analysis from the first year of operation of the Silvertown and Blackwall tunnels following the opening of the Silvertown Tunnel in April 2025. It has included an overview of a range of data, including traffic, public transport, socioeconomic and environmental impacts including air quality, user charging and supporting concessions and discounts.

Since the three-month on report was published in July 2025, we have prepared quarterly monitoring reports for the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group. This has helped group members to understand the impacts of the scheme and allow for discussion and feedback during the initial operating period.

This report has allowed us to share new data and analysis across a wider set of topic areas than has been possible through quarterly reporting. This includes data that has required a longer data series to ensure accurate and meaningful reporting of the topics. This report does not cover road safety, rail or carbon metrics, however these will be reported on in future, for example in a Travel in London report.

This report is part of a much broader monitoring programme which began three years before the Silvertown Tunnel opened, including annual thematic monitoring reports and Travel in London reporting.

In addition to our reporting commitments, we will continue to meet regularly with members of Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group for the remainder of the monitoring period. We will agree with this group after three years if the monitoring period should be extended from three to five years.

Overall, the monitoring data demonstrates that, one year after opening, congestion has reduced around the Blackwall Tunnel and there are improved journey times, while also supporting thousands of cross-river journeys by public transport. We will continue to monitor the tunnel closely for the rest of the monitoring period, to understand whether the scheme continues to perform in line with our expectations of boosting resilience, reducing congestion, managing traffic demand and supporting sustainable journeys and development across east London.

Silvertown Tunnel reporting in context

More detailed annual monitoring reports have been published on:

- Traffic flows and journey times
- Air quality and carbon dioxide emissions
- Noise
- Socioeconomic impacts

Travel in London reporting published in the autumn will provide a holistic summary of wider changes in background patterns or trends, for example transport mode shift and the impacts of new developments.

Baseline data on all these topics was collected for at least three years before the tunnel opened and will be used to understand the impacts.

Appendices

Comprising user charges, discounts and exemptions and the monitoring scope

Appendix A: User charges

The charges below were applicable during the first year of the scheme and will continue to be valid until 20 September 2026. The new charges are published in a new Statement of Charges and will be valid from 21 September 2026.

Silvertown and Blackwall user charges – 06:00 to 22:00

	Charges paid via Auto Pay		Charges paid via other channels
	Standard off-peak charges	Peak charges*	At all times
Motorcycle, moped, motor tricycle	£1.50	£2.50	£2.50
Car and small van	£1.50	£4.00	£4.00
Large van	£2.50	£6.50	£6.50
Heavy Goods Vehicles	£5.00	£10.00	£10.00

Penalty Charge Notice for non-payment – £180 (Reduced to £90 if paid within two weeks; maximum one PCN per day)

* Monday to Friday only. Northbound 06:00 to 10:00, Southbound 16:00 to 19:00

Appendix B: Discounts and exemptions

Discounts and exemptions are not automatically applied.
Customers must be registered in advance to receive an exemption.
Certain discounts and exemptions need to be reapplied for annually.

Discounts, exemptions and reimbursements for the user charges

Discounts, exemptions and reimbursements	Eligibility criteria
50 per cent discount	
East London low-income residents' discount until at least April 2028	To qualify individuals must live within an east London borough[1] and be in receipt of certain benefits.[2]
£1 discount business discount on standard off-peak charges	
Business discount	Eligible small businesses, sole traders and charities based in the host boroughs[3] can register a maximum of three vehicles to receive a £1 discount on off-peak charges.
100 per cent discount	
Recovery and breakdown vehicles	This discount applies to recovery and breakdown vehicles operated by organisations in the European Economic Area that are accredited to BS EN ISO9001:2008 (and in accordance with the specification for applying that standard to the industry).
Vehicles with nine seats or more	This discount applies to vehicles with nine seats or more (vehicles registered with the DVLA as a minibus, bus or coach will automatically receive a discount and will not need to apply for the discount).
Blue Badge holders	This discount applies to individuals who hold a valid Blue Badge in the European Economic Area. Individuals can register up to two vehicles that would be used to travel though Silvertown or Blackwall Tunnels. This could be their own vehicle, or one they travel in.
Certain operational vehicles	This discount applies to qualifying organisations that operate vehicles performing certain essential public services including certain services provided by the host boroughs.[3] Eligibility is determined by TfL.
Waste collection and waste disposal vehicles used by east London boroughs[4]	This discount applies to vehicles being used by east London boroughs to provide waste collection and disposal services. Eligibility is determined by TfL.
Zero-emission capable and wheelchair accessible private hire vehicles (PHVs)	This discount applies to PHVs designated as wheelchair-accessible vehicles or zero emission capable as long as they are fulfilling a private hire booking and are licensed with London Taxi and Private Hire.

1 London boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Bexley, Bromley, City of London Corporation, Royal Borough Greenwich, Hackney, Havering, Lewisham, Newham, Redbridge, Southwark, Tower Hamlets and Waltham Forest

2 Carer's Allowance, Child Tax Credit, Housing Benefit, Income-related Employment & Support Allowance, Income-based Jobseekers Allowance, Income Support, Universal Credit, State Pension Credit and Working Tax Credit

3 London boroughs of Newham, Tower Hamlets and Greenwich

4 East London boroughs are those listed in footnote 1

Discounts, exemptions and reimbursements	Eligibility criteria
Exemptions	
Taxis	This exemption applies to taxis which are licensed with London Taxi and Private Hire.
Emergency services vehicles exempt from vehicle tax	This exemption applies to emergency service vehicles which are exempt from vehicle tax including ambulances, police vehicles and fire engines.
NHS vehicles exempt from vehicle tax	This exemption applies to NHS vehicles that are exempt from vehicle tax.
Vehicles in the disabled tax class	This exemption applies to vehicles used by disabled people that are exempt from vehicle tax.
Military vehicles in use	This exemption applies to vehicles currently used by the armed forces including visiting services or international organisations.

Discounts, exemptions and reimbursements	Eligibility criteria
Reimbursements[5]	
NHS patient reimbursement	NHS patients are eligible for reimbursement if: 1. Clinically assessed as too ill, weak or disabled to travel to an appointment on public transport, and any of following apply: • Have a compromised immune system (problems with your immune system) • Require regular therapy or assessment • Require recurrent surgical intervention 2. During an epidemic or pandemic prevalent in Greater London, are clinically assessed as being too vulnerable to infection to travel to an appointment on public transport
NHS staff reimbursement	NHS staff members, are eligible for reimbursement if any of the following criteria is met: 1. Those using their vehicles to carry any of the following: • Bulky, heavy or fragile equipment/supplies • Patients' notes or other confidential material • Controlled drugs • Clinical waste, contaminated sharps, radioactive materials or non-medicinal poisons • Prescription-only medicines or waste medicinal products • Clinical specimens, body fluids, tissues or organs 2. Those responding to an emergency or other extraordinary circumstances when on call

5 Before making a claim for reimbursement, the user charge must be paid on or before the day of your journey, or the vehicle used for the journey must be registered for a TfL Auto Pay account

The NHS trust or hospital must be registered with TfL for the reimbursement scheme. Any refund request should be made through the NHS trust or hospital as they manage the reimbursement process, not TfL

Appendix C: The monitoring scope

The metrics considered by the Monitoring Plan are set out in the Monitoring and Mitigation Strategy. The approach to monitoring these metrics has been agreed with Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group members via a Record of Decision, which can be reviewed on the group's webpage.

Topic	Metrics include	Included in this report	Publication schedule
Traffic	River crossing performance		More detail on this topic is in the annual traffic monitoring report. These reports will be published throughout the monitoring period. The performance of other strategic and local links and junctions will be considered in future reporting to gain a holistic understanding of the scheme. Woolwich Ferry queue surveys take place annually and were reported in the Quarter 3 Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group quarterly update.
	Average daily traffic flow	Yes	
	Breakdown by vehicle type	Yes	
	Peak hour traffic delay	Yes	
	Key corridor performance (A2/A102, A12 and A13)		
	Average daily vehicle km	Yes	
	Other strategic and local links performance identified in monitoring plan	No	
	Junctions identified in monitoring plan	No	
Active travel	Boord Street walking and cycling bridge	Yes	Remaining topics will be considered as part of future reporting to gain a holistic understanding of the scheme.
	London Cable Car	Yes	
	Thames Screenline cycling survey (including Greenwich and Woolwich foot tunnels)	Yes	
	Other locations identified in the monitoring plan, including Lower Lea Crossing	No	
	Scheme of Mitigation sites (includes Bow roundabout, Preston's roundabout and A13/A102)	No	
Public transport	Buses		Included in this report.
	Performance and patronage	Yes	
	Journey time and speed	Yes	
	Cycling		
	Cycle shuttle patronage	Yes	
	Rail		Patronage of Underground and DLR lines that cross the river in east London close to the scheme, such as Jubilee line, Elizabeth line and DLR branches towards Greenwich and Woolwich Arsenal, will be reported on later this year as part of a Travel in London report.
	Jubilee line	No	
	Elizabeth line	No	
	DLR branches towards Greenwich and Woolwich Arsenal	No	
Road safety	Key corridors (A2/A102, A12 and A13)	No	Road safety data will be analysed once it has been quality-assured and processed into our collision database COLLSTATS at a later date. This will be reported on later this year as part of a Travel in London report.
	Other strategic and local links identified in monitoring plan	No	
	Junctions identified in monitoring plan	No	
Travel behaviour	Changes in travel behaviour Blackwall Tunnel and Silvertown Tunnel users and the local population	Yes	Data is collected as part of the wider socioeconomic monitoring surveys
Concessions and discounts	DLR refunds and free bus travel	Yes	Has been reported quarterly to the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group throughout the first year of operations and is included in this report.
	User charges low income and business discount	Yes	
	Blue Badge holder 100% discount uptake	Yes	

Topic	Metrics include	Included in this report	Publication schedule
User charges	Charges by vehicle type	Yes	Quarterly factsheets on the operational performance of the user charges have been published on our website. These include information on how many people pay the charge, numbers of vehicles registered for discounts and exemptions and penalty charge notices.
	Compliance	Yes	
	Enforcement	Yes	
Air quality	Nitrogen dioxide		This report includes a comment on the review of the data by an independent expert. More detail on this topic is in the annual air quality monitoring report. These reports will be published throughout the monitoring period. Live results from the three continuous monitoring sites are available on the London Air Quality Network website www.londonair.org.uk Given the transboundary nature of PM2.5 and the need to understand it across London as a region, the levels are not be reported in direct relation to the scheme. However, this report does reference PM2.5 levels from London-wide GLA/ TfL monitoring.
	Continuous monitoring sites	Yes	
	Diffusion tubes	Yes	

Topic	Metrics include	Included in this report	Publication schedule
Carbon	Total emissions level using data from the traffic monitoring and comparing observed flow to the reference case	No	This will be reported on later this year as part of a Travel in London report.
Noise	Hourly noise levels using the following measurements: • Laeq • LAI0 • LAmax	Yes	More detail on this topic is provided in the annual noise monitoring report. These reports will be published throughout the monitoring period.
Socio-economic	Economic, social and travel indicators	Yes	More detail on this topic is provided in the annual socioeconomic monitoring report. These reports will be published throughout the monitoring period.
	Business and residents surveys	Yes	

About us

As part of the Greater London Authority family led by Mayor of London Sadiq Khan, we are the integrated transport authority responsible for delivering the Mayor's aims for transport. We have a key role in shaping what life is like in London, helping to realise the Mayor's vision for a 'City for All Londoners' and helping to create a safer, fairer, greener, healthier and more prosperous city. The Mayor's Transport Strategy sets a target for 80 per cent of all journeys to be made by walking, cycling or using public transport by 2041. To make this a reality, we prioritise safety, sustainability, health and the quality of people's experience in everything we do.

We run most of London's public transport services, including the London Underground, London Buses, the DLR, London Overground, Elizabeth line, London Trams, the Woolwich Ferry, London Dial-a-Ride, Victoria Coach Station, Santander Cycles and the London Cable Car. We also operate London River Services, which includes licensing river boat operator services to use a number of piers. We manage the city's red route strategic roads and are responsible for the maintenance, management and operation of more than 6,000 sets of traffic lights across the capital. The London boroughs are responsible for all the remaining roads within their boundaries.

The experience, reliability and accessibility of our services are fundamental to Londoners' quality of life. Safety remains our number one priority and we continue to work tirelessly to improve safety across the network for both colleagues and customers.

Our vision is to be a strong, green heartbeat for London. We are investing in green infrastructure, improving walking and cycling, reducing carbon emissions and making the city's air cleaner. The Ultra Low Emission Zone, and fleets of increasingly environmentally friendly and zero-emission buses, are helping to tackle London's toxic air. We are also improving public transport options, particularly in outer London, to ensure that more people can choose public transport or active travel over using their vehicles. We introduced the Superloop bus network, providing express bus routes circling the entire capital, connecting outer London town centres, railway stations, hospitals and transport hubs.

We have constructed many of London's most significant infrastructure projects in recent years, using transport to unlock economic growth and improve connectivity. This includes major projects like the extension of the Northern line to Battersea Power Station and Nine Elms in south London, as well as the completion of the London Overground extension to Barking Riverside and the Bank station upgrade.

The Elizabeth line, which opened in 2022, has quickly become one of the country's most popular railways, adding 10 per cent to central London's rail capacity and supporting new jobs, homes and economic growth. We also use our own land to provide thousands of new affordable homes and our own supply chain creates tens of thousands of jobs and apprenticeships across the country.

We are committed to being an employer that is fully representative of the community we serve, where everyone can realise their potential. Our aim is to be a fully inclusive employer, valuing and celebrating the diversity of our workforce to improve services for all Londoners.

We are constantly working to improve the city for everyone. This means using information, data and technology to make services intuitive and easy to use, and doing all we can to make streets and transport services accessible and safe to all.

We reinvest every penny of our income to continually improve transport networks for the people who use them every day. None of this would be possible without the support of boroughs, communities and other partners who we work with to improve our services. By working together, we are creating brighter journeys and a better city.

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