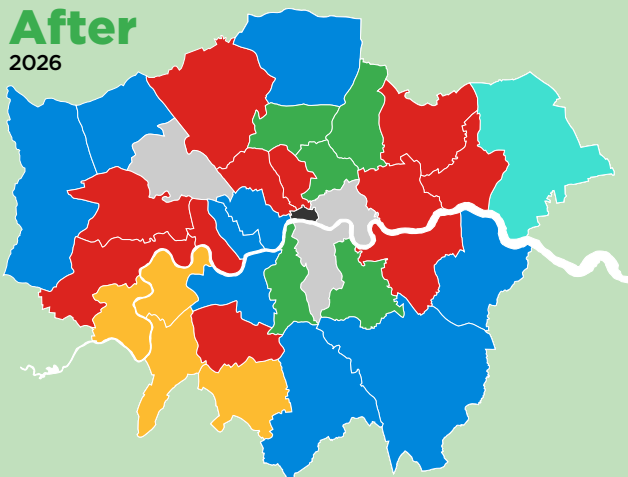


Local elections: Labour the big loser

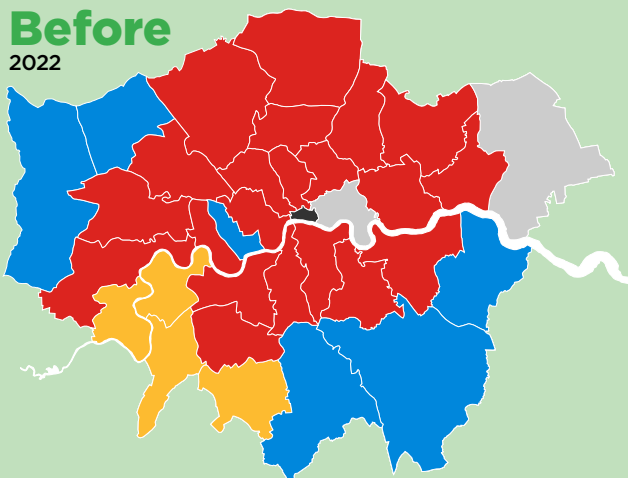
The story of the local elections across England was that of Labour red disappearing, with Reform UK and the Greens the big winners.

The Conservatives did, though, in London (see maps) win back control of Wandsworth, Westminster and Enfield. The latter will be interesting: will the Conservatives remove the highly contentious LTNs put in by Labour?

After
2026



Before
2022



We will produce special newsletter later in the Summer when things become clearer looking at the potential impact of the results on LTNs.

Now for a rural LTN

Oxfordshire County Council wants to introduce a “*quiet lanes*” pilot scheme which could close some rural roads to through-traffic to make them safer for cyclists and walkers.



Farmers are particularly concerned, calling the plan “*madness*,” as it creates huge logistical nightmares for moving large agricultural machinery and managing deliveries.

One farmer said, “*Think of trying to get a combine harvester down an even longer, more unsuitable road!*”. The council insists alternative routes exist and agricultural workers will get access, but the big question is: will it really work in practice?

Council leader Tim Bearder has stated that closures will only be implemented where a viable alternative route exists for cars. However, local villagers are worried about the practicalities. Nicola Mallows, a resident, highlighted the reality of rural life, pointing out that villagers depend on their cars for essential journeys and that Shepards Pit Lane is a vital connection, not just a scenic drive.

LTN opposition just won't go away

Residents & Businesses
Stand Together
We Say NO to EBLN
YES to Safer Streets
FOR ALL

**EAST BRISTOL OPEN ROADS
CAMPAIGN GROUP**

!! COMMUNITY MEETING !!

**THURSDAY
JUNE 18TH 7PM**

**THE BOARD MILLS SOCIAL CLUB
AVONVALE ROAD**

PLEASE COME ALONG TO SEE THE OVERWHELMING
EVIDENCE GATHERED TO SUPPORT FULL REMOVAL OF THE
EBLN.

A COMMUNITY UNITED

When local authorities installed their covid and post-covid LTNs, they expected opposition to fade away. Instead, the LTNs remain hugely contentious.

Remember some years back, when the Green Council in Bristol was forced to start work on its 'East Bristol Liveable Neighbourhood' under cover of darkness, at 3am, with a heavy police presence, and with drones buzzing overhead.

Aspire to challenge LTN ruling in supreme court

Tower Hamlets Council and Mayor Lutfur Rahman (Aspire Party) are escalating their legal battle over Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs) to the UK Supreme Court.

The council is seeking to overturn a January 2026 Court of Appeal ruling which declared their plans to remove three LTNs in Bethnal Green unlawful despite featuring prominently in their 2022 Manifesto. ASPIRE were returned to power with a comfortable majority at the recent local elections.

Average speed of London's buses 7MPH



London's 7.1mph average bus speed is 'no faster than average jogging pace'. A 10% increase in bus speeds across London could save bus operators around £214 million a year, according to the Confederation of Passenger Transport (CPT).

Congestion, roadworks, 20mph speed limits, and the expansion of cycle lanes and Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTNs), have all been blamed for the decline.

The findings have renewed calls for investment in the capital's bus network, with the CPT arguing that faster services could free up millions of pounds for Transport for London (TfL) and dramatically improve daily journeys for commuters.



Earlier research from London TravelWatch showed that, while millions of Londoners use the bus, poorer people and black and ethnic communities are most dependent on it. Buses are also critical for many disabled people.

You can read the survey here:

<https://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk/news/blog-post-who-uses-the-bus-and-why/>

Is this London's most nightmarish crossing?



This an abridged version of an article by Brooke Davies that first appeared in the Metro (22/5/26). It focuses on London but it has become a national issue as many local authorities across the country are introducing floating bus stops.

“A man stuck out his thumb pleading with the traffic to let him cross, not at the side of a dusty highway, but at a cycle lane’s pedestrian crossing.”

The crossing, outside of Blackfriars Station in central London, has been nicknamed by locals as *‘the nightmare’*, while others have warned it’s an accident waiting to happen. It sits over a two-way cycle lane as part of a controversial floating bus stop, the design of which has been frequently criticised.

And when Metro went down to the crossing during rush hour on Wednesday evening, it is easy to see why. Cyclists frequently do not stop for pedestrians trying to use the crossing, meaning they have no choice but to make a mad dash across the lane. In total, we counted 60 failed at-attempts to cross safely in little more than an hour.

Indie, from Kent, grimaced as she ran across the crossing once an eventual gap appeared. When we stopped to ask her how she found it, her eyes rolled. *‘Well you have just seen my face,’* she said. *‘I have never seen a crossing like this before, and it is so fast.’*

No one is spared from having to make the risky move across. Approaching a man waiting at the bus stop after making the mad dash revealed Baron Richard Newby, OBE.

He told Metro: *‘We have debated these in the House of Lords before, but this is my first time using one. Now I can fully see why there are safety fears.’* Last year the Upper Chamber narrowly failed to pass an amendment which would have prevented any more floating bus stops from being installed.

This is despite campaigners furiously pushing for the risks posed to blind people to be recognised. Kasia Kubasek, who is a blind bus user in London, told Metro: *‘It is absolutely terrifying. I cannot see or hear the bicycles. Even the thought of having to cross a cycle lane to get to the bus stop, fills me with a fear that paralyses me and I avoid them like fire.’*

Floating bus stops were brought in for the safety of cyclists, who can prevent being stuck behind buses with the design. Cycling groups have said they are key to reducing road danger, but there are some concerns those on bikes are not given enough warning about the crossing.

You can read the article here:

<https://metro.co.uk/2026/05/22/this-londons-nightmarish-crossing-went-find-28464064/>

Cycle deaths and serious injuries at all-time high in London



Derived from DfT road safety tool and TfL's road safety dashboard.
*2025 is derived from TfL officers saying 20% higher than 2024

In 2025 London recorded the highest level of serious cyclist injuries and deaths since records began.

Even higher than when cycle sport drove up cycling volumes in 2011/12. It is also the highest per mile cycled. Real questions need to be asked about if cycle lanes, floating bus stops and LTNs are even working for cyclists.

Disabled people need cars, buses and congestion-free roads

Three clear things stand out from the English National Travel Survey:

- 1. Disabled people travel much less than non-disabled people.*
- 2. When they do travel disabled people are very reliant on a car (either as a driver or passenger).*
- 3. Buses are also important to disabled people, with those with a milder disability using them more than able-bodied people*

People whose **disability impacts them a lot** (the phrase used by the National Travel Survey) make significantly fewer trips by most modes. They take **89% fewer rail journeys, 60% fewer car or van driving trips, and 52% fewer walking trips** than those without a disability. In contrast, they make **84% more taxi or minicab trips** and **7% more trips as a car or van passenger**.

For those whose **disability impacts them a little**, the pattern is similar but less pronounced.

They make **65% fewer rail trips** and **24% fewer driving trips**, yet they take **32% more bus journeys, 38% more taxi or minicab trips, and 19% more trips as a car or van passenger** compared to people with no reported disability.

Part of the reason for low rail use is the difficulty of accessing stations in the first place, often due to the distances involved and the challenges of walking to and within stations. There is work to be done in this area.



But the big lesson for policymakers is how dependent disabled people are on road transport, whether it is a car, bus or van.

Traffic congestion can be serious for disabled people. Cycle lanes which take road space away from car and bus traffic should be looked at in this light. As should low traffic neighbourhoods which relocate traffic onto 'main' roads. Floating bus stops, where people need to cross a cycle lane to get the bus, can deter disabled people from travelling.

Most people would say there are too many cars on our roads and policies need to be out in place to tackle that but, in the meantime, it is not acceptable to put in place things like cycle lanes, low traffic neighbourhoods and floating bus stops which harm disabled people. The disability community has word for it: **eco-ableism**.

You can read the survey here:

<https://www.gov.uk/government/collections/national-travel-survey-statistics>

Blog by SEJ Director John Stewart.

We welcome contributions to the newsletter.

Our Newsletter

Please contact us if you would like to become a member.

Email:
sej@socialenvironmentaljustice.co.uk

Website:
www.socialenvironmentaljustice.co.uk

Twitter (X):
[@SocEnvJustice](https://twitter.com/SocEnvJustice)

We are entirely funded by our supporters, so donations welcome.