

Stephen Dering and Caroline Pidgeon's Croydon Tram Survey February 2009



Reporting back on the results

Edited by Stephen Dering



Executive Summary

The Croydon tram network is a valuable rapid transit system for people who live in the boroughs of Bromley, Croydon, Sutton and Merton to travel to both other areas of south London and to interchange stations for trains into Central London.

After some issues were raised with overcrowding and security at some stations late at night, a survey of tram users was developed to find out the extent of the problems and to identify where solutions may be practical.

The survey was carried out over the week 9 to 13 February 2009 and over 1,000 people were approached at tram stops within the Croydon Central Westminster Parliamentary Constituency.

The key findings of the survey are:

- 73% found overcrowding to be unacceptable or preventing boarding
- 70% found to be happy with their local stop. Some issues identified
- A quarter found to be experiencing problems with ticket machines
- A quarter did not feel safe at tram stops. Some issues identified to improve safety
- 65% thought the Mayor was wrong to scrap the extension to Crystal Palace

A wide range of ideas and suggestions were made to improve public transport (see page 7) and some of these will be taken forward with Transport for London. For example, a respondent suggested taking bikes onto the tram. A bike rack at the front of the tram may be a solution that would not affect the overcrowding issue identified.

Tram stops in Croydon Central:

West Croydon
Wellsley Road
George Street
East Croydon
Lebanon Road
Sandilands
Addiscombe
Blackhorse Lane
Woodside
Arena
Lloyd Park
Coombe Lane
Gravel Hill
Addington Village
Fieldway
King Henry Drive
New Addington

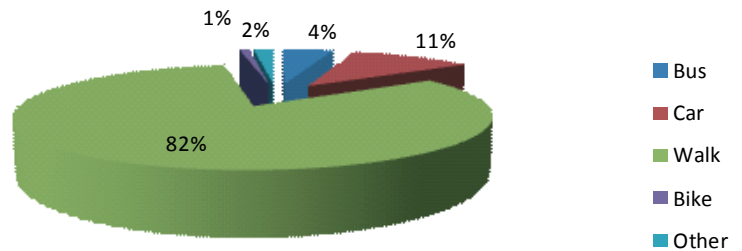
Response to questions

The majority of people surveyed walked to their local station.

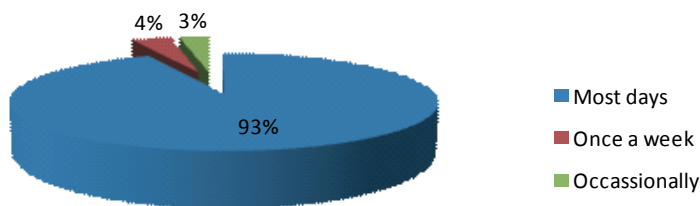
98% of the 4% who travelled by bus used the interchange at Addington Village and therefore started their journey in Forestdale and Bromley areas.

The majority of survey respondents who used a car to get to a tram station used Lloyd Park tram stop.

How do you travel to your starting station?



How often do you make this trip?



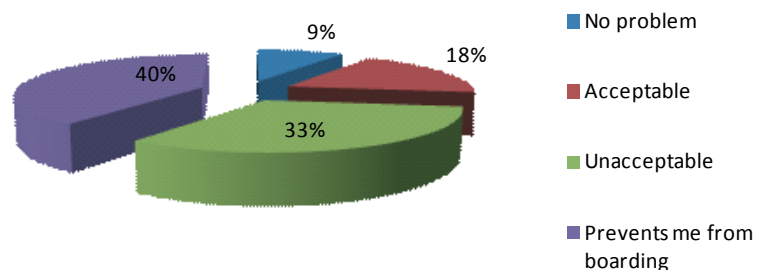
The majority of survey respondents (93%) make the trip most days of the week.

This is reflected in the timings of the survey at 6.30am to 8.30am being the peak hours for people commuting to work or school.

The majority of survey respondents (73%) found overcrowding on the tram service to be either unacceptable or at a level to prevent boarding.

It was noted that everyone who replied that they use the tram once a week or occasionally felt that the level of overcrowding was acceptable. A similar response was evident from those who left earlier or later than peak times.

How do you find overcrowding on your tram service?



It was also noticed that where people were going against the flow of traffic, overcrowding was not considered to be an issue.

"I ticked no problem but that is because I leave at 6am. I know if 8am, I won't get to work on time."
Addiscombe tram stop

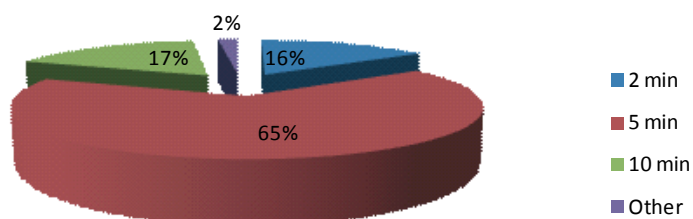
"Trams from Beckenham to Croydon are full. I have to wait for a tram from Elmers End."
Arena tram stop

The majority of people surveyed get a tram within 5 minutes. (81%)

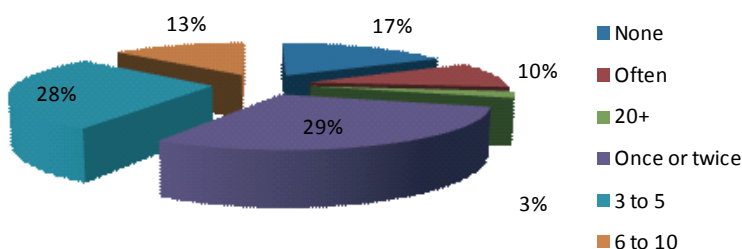
However, six people indicated that although a tram arrives within the timeframe, there is no guarantee that they can get on it due to overcrowding.

The worst affected area is Sandilands and Lebanon Road where overcrowded through trams to Wimbledon run every 10 to 15 min.

How long do you expect to wait on the platform for the tram?



How many times in the last month have you been delayed?



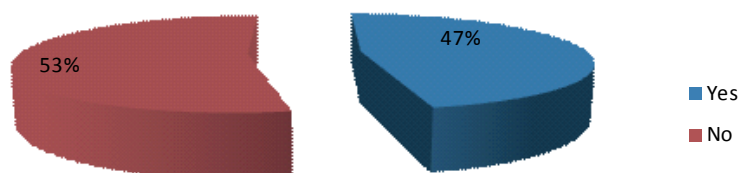
Although 29% of respondents state that they were delayed once or twice, for the majority, it was due to the snow conditions in the week prior to the survey. A reasonable assumption is therefore that trams are considered to be a very reliable form of transport.

There is an almost even split in the number of people who were asked about if they were adequately informed of delays.

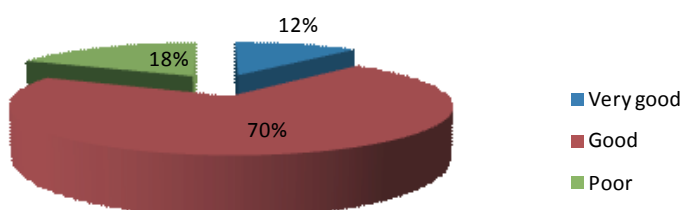
"They never give out enough information on TV or radio stations."

Sandilands tram stop

Do you feel that you are adequately informed about delayed services?



What do you think about the state of your local tram station?



82% of respondents were happy with their local tram stop.

Some comments were made about litter at Addiscombe and Blackhorse Lane and graffiti at Woodside.

"Only platforms were gritted - they forgot about the steps."

Blackhorse Lane tram stop

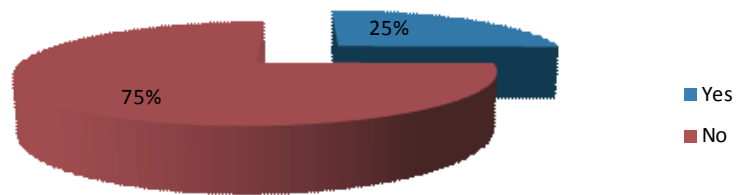
The majority of respondents had experienced no problems with the ticket machine/Oyster card.

A supplementary question asked what the problems were. Most were related to the following issues:

- Ticket machine not working
- Oyster card reader not working
- Ticket machine not giving change or accepting notes
- Inability to top up Oyster card at machine

An issue raised was that the tramlink office is only open 9-5 Monday to Friday so people found it difficult to secure a refund.

Have you experienced problems with the ticket machine/Oyster card?



“Card ceases to function for no apparent reason and getting a replacement is problematic because you need to go to a tube station but cannot travel...!”
Addiscombe tram stop

“Did not give me change or a voucher to claim change.”
Harrington Road tram stop

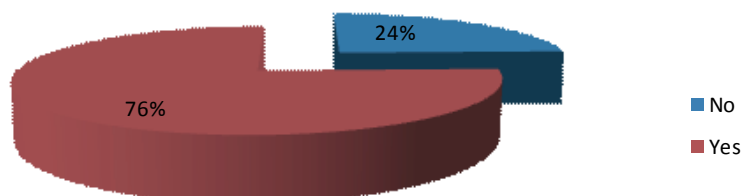
“Oyster machine screen is small and scratched so it is hard to see how much credit you have left.”
Sandilands tram stop

If you have a disability, have you ever experienced problems using local stations, tram or train services?

Only five people responded to this question. Three are deaf and explained that they are unaware of any tannoy announcements as any information announced is not then shown on screen.

One respondent highlighted poor access to Blackhorse Lane for disabled people and one from Woodside highlighted that there are not enough seats at tram stops for people who need to sit because of back pain.

Do you feel safe at your local station?



A quarter of respondents indicated that they do not feel safe at their local station.

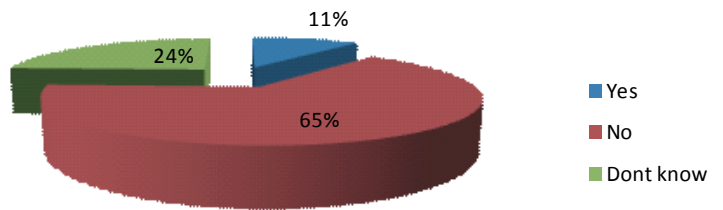
The main issue is gangs at stations not on main roads and where lighting levels are poor eg Arena's alleyway. At Blackhorse Lane where there is only one exit, a group of teenagers can feel intimidating.

At Woodside there is only one CCTV camera. Both Woodside and Blackhorse Lane were highlighted as places with unkempt bushes that added to the fear of these stops.

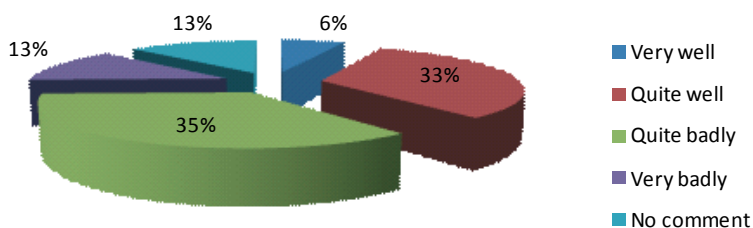
There was a strong view amongst respondents (65%) that the Mayor should not have scrapped the proposed extension to Crystal Palace.

Of note was that several of the respondents who said yes or don't know justified their response on the basis that an extension to Crystal Palace would increase the number of tram users. If the extension was to go ahead and there was increased capacity on the route serving the stops before the Crystal Palace spur, then an 85% response in favour of the extension would not be unfeasible.

Should the Mayor have scrapped the proposed extension to Crystal Palace?



How well do you think the Mayor is doing at improving the tram service?

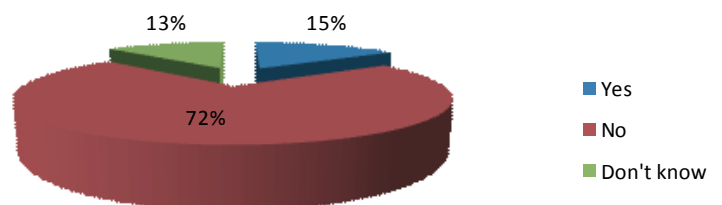


A majority of respondents felt that the Mayor was performing badly in improving the tram service. (68%)

A link was identified between the answer here and the respondents who mentioned a reduction in trams since Transport for London took over the running of the service.

A majority of respondents (72%) were against any proposals to scrap cash fares.

Now that 97% of passengers use Oyster cards on bus, tube and tram has the time come to get rid of cash fares?



Response to final question

The last question asked was "Please let us know what one improvement you would like to see made to improve public transport where you live or work."

Responses included:

- Pleasant and helpful staff (especially bus drivers)
- Longer tram carriages
- More frequent buses when trams are not operating
- Cleaning Blackhorse Lane tram stop more frequently
- Better communication regarding delays
- Increasing the frequency of through trams to Wimbledon
- Sort out Capital First Connet (Bedford to Brighton) which is a shambles
- Litter clearance in Arena and Woodside
- Reduction of buses travelling in convoys
- Removing free tram travel for school children, instead putting on school buses separate from public transport
- Install a new bus stop at Elmers End as the current ones are too far apart
- A bus from Addiscombe to Beckenham
- Simplified ticketing system
- Developing a Bromely/Croydon bus network
- More ticket inspection backed with police support

"To be able to take bikes on trams as people cycle one end and need to the other."

Arena tram stop

"Why not add on a carriage so that trams become 3-car trams? Make this an 'express' carriage where doors only open at long platform stations which are key stations such as East Croydon."

Fieldway tram stop

"Increasing frequency at peak times"

This was the most common request

"Trams should run from Elmers End through to Wimbledon - this would decrease overcrowding on this route and remove the need to change tram en-route."

Arena tram stop

"The 197 bus is very unreliable."

Blackhorse Lane tram stop

"The ability to review tram and bus real time travel information from a phone or PDA."

Addiscombe tram stop

"Tram stop in Shirley."

Lloyd Park tram stop

"Ability to top up Oyster card at station."

Woodside tram stop

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