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Meeting with Royal Parks Agency 7 Nov

As reported at the 8 Nov MOG meeting, I met with Jo Brigham, Director of Strategy and Marketing, Royal Parks at her request to discuss vehicular access through the Parks, particularly Richmond, Bushy and Greenwich.

The roads within the Royal Parks are the responsibility of the Agency, who maintain them but now face a problem in that the roads were designed as park roads but now carry significantly greater volumes of traffic in transit or using the parks as a relief route. It is estimated that 96 – 98% of traffic is through traffic with between 2,500 and 3,800 vehicles entering Richmond Park during peak hours.

A recent cycling fatality in Richmond Park highlighted the dangers and risks to joggers, cyclists and walkers. Royal Parks accept that there is a variety of views on traffic but there would be direct and indirect benefits to environment and ambience if some traffic could be displaced. Local Authorities may hold road use data relating to the closure of Richmond Park during the Foot and Mouth outbreak and these figures may help to inform likely impact of traffic displacement.

The Agency is seeking to reduce traffic, not simply displace onto surrounding roads and is therefore considering a tolling system. This would replace car parking charges and be more cost effective. Support from TfL and boroughs would be welcomed in developing initiatives to reduce traffic, such as managing alternative solutions, examining opportunities for access by public transport, incentivising green transport and shared use of motor vehicles. The Agency would be interested in comparative emission data for buses and cars to encourage use of public transport but appreciate the need to consider origin/destination information.

Turning to the Central London parks, there is interest in joint publicity campaigns to draw attention to the value of the parks as walking routes and there is an opportunity to review cycle routes.

Issues for TfL Consideration:

- Feasibility and impact of a tolling system.
- Opportunities for public transport access to parks or entrances.
- Opportunities for promotion of walking and review of cycling provision.
- Impact of displacement and strategy to manage.

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