

# Conference supports tram systems

'Bad news for criminals, car park operators and people wanting to be late for work' said Iain Sim, describing Tramlink and the impact it has made with its fast efficient system, enhanced by CCTV coverage.

Mr Sim, London Borough of Croydon's Director of Urban Regeneration, was one of eight speakers addressing the Light Rapid Transit Forum Conference 'Creating World Class Cities for the UK', held at Fairfield Halls, Croydon on 14th May.

The message of the conference was that trams work. In Croydon trams have boosted the local economy and built stronger local communities, with fully accessible and regular services to the town giving previously isolated suburbs an easy link to Croydon's extensive amenities.

Howard Smith, Chief Operating Officer, TfL London Rail, said 'People really appreciate Tramlink,' commenting that the impressive customer satisfaction score of 86% was very much due to the hard work of staff at TOL. He went on to say that TfL had already massively

increased investment in Tramlink with refurbishment of tram stops and trams.

The conference included a discussion forum. Colin Walton, Director of Bombardier, said: 'This is the right time for trams'. Tram systems cost 'small change' in relative terms but the benefits they bring can be astonishing.

Steven Norris, Board Member at TfL, described the feelings of 'pride and optimism' tram systems generate.

Iain Sim reinforced this, saying that Croydon Council was always fully behind Tramlink and the system had become an icon for Croydon. The Council's positive support could be relied on, regardless of the political party in power.

As local operator, TOL staffed a display stand at the event and hosted an evening tour of the depot for Mott MacDonald and their guests, including the Deputy Mayoress of Croydon.

Paul Samuel drove the special tram 'Celebrating One Year of London

Tramlink' which took guests to and from the depot.

Many other staff put in a lot of effort behind the scenes and on the day to make the conference a success.



Howard Smith, Chief Operating Officer, TfL London Rail, addresses the conference.



The Deputy Mayoress with Ray Hayter.

Photos by Chris Clark and Michael Stewart



Mark Lewis shows a control room work station to Croydon's Deputy Mayoress.



Visitors including Paul Rowen MP (far right) view the wheel lathe at the depot.



Steve Duckering congratulates Mick Johns and Ian Exall on their remarkable safe driving achievements

## TOL's safest drivers

Safety is the number one priority at TOL and last year was the eighth year of the company's Safe Driving Award scheme. The scheme, which is fully approved by ROSCO, aims to encourage and reward safe tram driving. It started in 2001, the first complete calendar year of tram operation in Croydon.

2008 was another excellent year for **Mick Johns**, who has been with TOL since the system started and has an amazing **seven** years of Safe Driving Awards. Close behind is **Ian Exall** with **five** years. Ian joined the company in 2003 and since then his driving record has been immaculate.

Five drivers have achieved an impressive **four** consecutive years Safe Driving Awards. They are **Timothy Amat, Lawrence Ault, Christopher Goad, Jason Martin** and **Brian Wiseman**.

With an excellent **three** consecutive years Safe Driving Awards are **Charmaine Bennett, Patrick Bennett, Roy Cowx, Chris Jenkins, Michael Mensah, Robert Sambridge, Chris Smith, Konrad Turner** and **Anne Williams**.

Nine drivers gained **two** years Safe Driving Awards. They are: **Sam Ako-Otchere, Barry Allen, Steve Davies, Tony Fernando, Ian Hoskin, Andrew Johnson-Goffe, Solomon Kyereme, Linda Negus** and **Les Paul**.

Gaining **one** year Safe Driving Awards are: **Khalid Abdulaziz, Kennedy Akuoko, Peter Ashby, Peter Baker, David Brinkworth, Frances Carey, Mark Crisp, Sylvester Cudjoe, Bryan Evans, Barry Fitzharris, Akeal Forbes, Ian Hogben, Wayne Holder, Steve Holman, Phil Hubbard, Don Humphreys, Murray Jones, Richard Kitchener, Michael Mack, John McBride, Stephen Milward, Kuttan Murukesan, Barry Philpot, Flavia Pierobon, Dave Telling, Malcolm White, Mark Woodhouse** and **George Xenophontos**.

All staff received gift vouchers as a thank you for their achievement. Operations Director Steve Duckering said: 'Getting a Safe Driving Award is no easy feat. Although the Tramlink system has only 4.2 kilometres of street track, TOL drivers have to meet very stringent criteria to qualify for the award. Safe tram driving includes, for

example, never opening the doors on the wrong side, not taking the wrong route and, of course, never passing a signal at stop. When speaking to drivers about their awards it is noticeable how much recognition of their achievement is valued. Well done!

What's the secret of being a safe tram driver? Ian Exall has held a driving licence since 1977 and believes experience plays a big part. 'Always err on the side of caution' he advises. 'Rely on your senses, don't rush and expect the unexpected.'

Mick Johns added that it helps a lot to start the day with a positive attitude. 'Car driving standards have deteriorated a lot over the last few years but don't let it get to you, just try to stay on top of your job and have the best day you can.'

TOL runs a range of training programmes designed to improve driving skills and a 'Human Factors in Driving' course is currently underway. This explores the way personality can affect driving style and reactions to other road users. Feedback so far is positive.

