



## LONDON

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### **Boris Johnson promises driverless Tube trains within 10 years**

[Driverless trains](#) could be running on the London Underground within the next decade, Conservative London Mayor Boris Johnson has said.

Mr Johnson, who is standing for re-election in May, said if returned to office he would not buy new Tube trains with drivers' cabs.

He wanted tighter strike laws to tackle "hardline union barons" objections.

The Green, LibDem and Labour candidates said the mayor did not look at fare costs but focused on "vanity projects".

LibDem mayoral candidate Brian Paddick said Mr Johnson's manifesto took up his own plan for driverless trains.

Jenny Jones, the Green Party's mayoral hopeful, said there were concerns about safety of the driverless trains.

The Labour candidate, Ken Livingstone, criticised the mayor for not making any pledges to cut fare rises.

#### **Industrial action**

In his transport manifesto, Mr Johnson said: "It is time to move forward with 'train captains' - along the lines of the DLR (Docklands Light Railway) - with all the efficiency benefits it will bring and absolutely no loss of safety.

"TfL (Transport for London) will rapidly establish a timetable for introducing the first driverless trains to become operational on the London Underground network within a decade."

He said he was expecting opposition from some union leaders.

"I am requesting a mandate from Londoners to push again for changes to national strike law, so that industrial action can no longer be triggered by a small minority of union members," he said.

Mr Paddick said: "Pleased to hear Mr Johnson taking up a promise I made at our first mayoral hustings six weeks ago.

"As long as the technology exists for it to be done safely and so that there is a member of staff on each train who can walk through the carriage, there is no reason why we shouldn't introduce driverless trains."

Mr Livingstone said: "Boris Johnson could have taken the opportunity of this transport document to finally end his commitment to high fares.

"He has opted for expensive vanity projects with Londoners paying for the most expensive bus in the world while the Tory Mayor refuses cut the fares and invest in better services."

Ms Jones said: "The reality of driverless trains is obviously there will be concerns about safety, but quite honestly I just don't think he will do it.

"I think the millions that have been spent on the New Bus for London have been very badly spent."

#### **'Congestion busting fund'**

Elsewhere in the manifesto, Mr Johnson promised 600 new buses, which replaced Routemasters, would be on London's roads by 2016.

He pledged to invest £50m in a "congestion busting fund" to deal with busy roads.

He planned to expand the cycle hire scheme to the east and west of London and also look towards expanding to south London.

Mr Johnson also restated his plan for a new hub airport built on an artificial island in the Thames Estuary.

Coinciding with the launch of the manifesto, TfL said it had received £5m from the Department for Transport to add an extra 70 hybrid buses by 2013 to its current fleet of 260 hybrid buses.

TfL received £5m in 2009, £8m in 2010 and £5m in 2011 from the DfT's Green Bus Fund.

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