

## Gridlock

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I've just read an article in the paper on London's gridlock. Apparently traffic in

central London is moving slower (8mph) than in late Victorian times (12mph). Famously in 2015/16 the number 11 bus moved so slowly (4mph on average) it was quicker to walk! I don't know the stats for Edinburgh but its probably not much better. It certainly took me an hour to go about 3 miles one Friday evening. Back to London. Why is this when the congestion charge has pretty much got rid of all private cars? Private cars – yes. But Uber drivers who use cars - no. Taxis - no. Vans and some lorries - no and of course buses. Amazon deliveries - no. Maybe nature does abhor a vacuum. The upshot is everyone blames one another and lots of people blame the cyclists who have new super high ways which have taken up road space The cyclists obviously blame one everyone else. London is a big place and one reason is that the government is shared between the assembly and local boroughs. There is lack of coordination between Transport for London and the boroughs according to many commentators, which sounds reasonable. Edinburgh and other big UK cities don't have that excuse. Another possible reason is population growth, 1 million in the last 10 years. Edinburgh has also grown. Even if those people rarely leave their house their needs must be serviced (deliveries). Again this sounds plausible. After all how often are new highways built in cities? What is the solution to the increasing gridlock? The answer is no one seems to have one. There is no doubt that getting people to walk and cycle is at least part of the way around the gridlock issue. Both are much more space efficient than any vehicle. Edinburgh has reintroduced trams but while they are now well used the limited nature of the city centre route has not noticeably reduced traffic congestion. The problem is that vans in particular seem vital to city life providing goods and services to businesses and private individuals in the city centre. There doesn't seem to be a ready solution - but one needs to be found.

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