

**Buses campaign  
communications  
development**

**11030**

July 2011



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- Research conducted by 2CV

# Contents

**Background**

**Executive summary**

**Overall response to the campaign**

**Feedback on the initiatives**

# Background

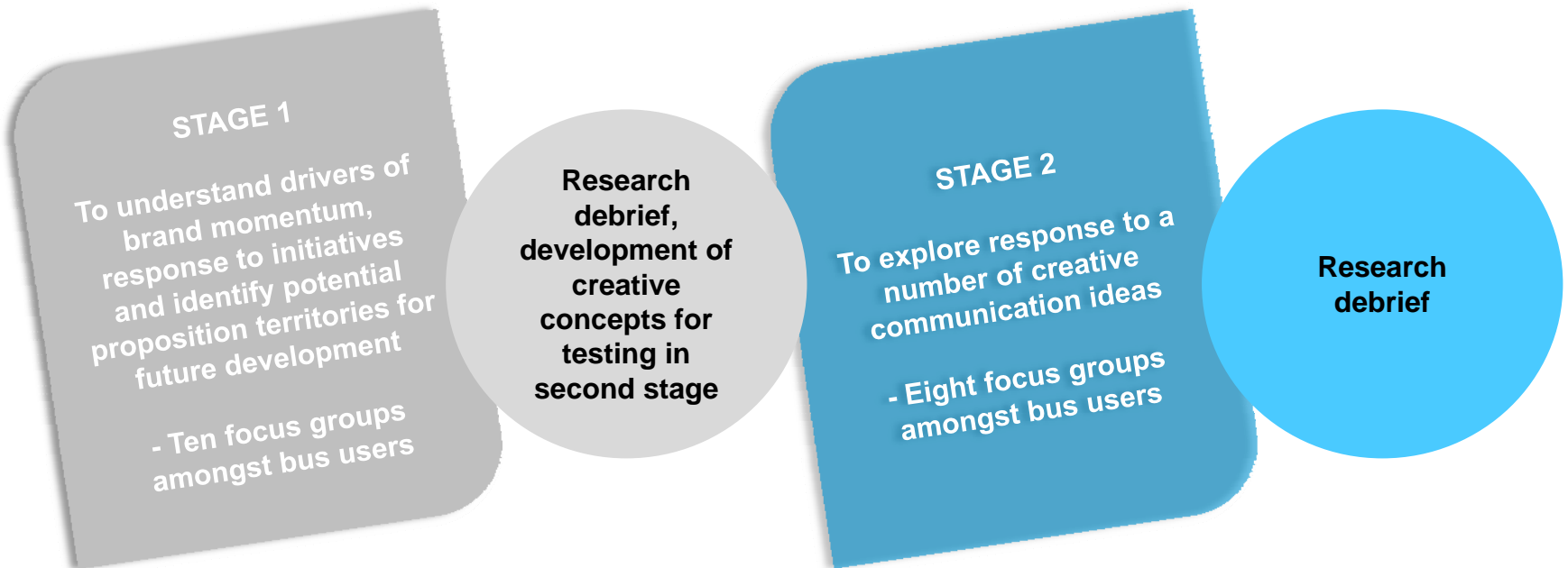


- Over the next eighteen months there are some new initiatives and changes for London Buses
  - This includes the introduction of the predicted bus time service, hybrid and hydrogen buses and the new London Bus
- The first stage of this two stage project sought to explore drives of brand momentum for buses amongst users
  - This document represents the findings from the second stage



## A multi-stage project

- This document presents the findings of the second phase of a two stage research and creative development process:



- Stage 1 research conducted by 2CV in March 2011
- Stage 2 conducted by 2CV in June 2011

## Stage 2: research objectives

### Campaign KPIs

- *Primary KPI: Buses reputation management, maintaining or improving brand momentum*
- *Secondary KPI: increase usage of Buses where capacity exists on the system*

### Research Objectives

- To explore customer response to the campaign ideas and performance against the campaign KPIs (with a particular focus on the primary KPI)
- To provide guidance on development of the new campaign

# A note on the stimulus

- Customers were shown a number of executions:

### Predicted bus time service

This execution features two main panels. The top panel is titled "Handier. Smarter. Better." and includes the text: "Our new bus tool tells you when your next bus will arrive. It should save you hanging around. To use it, text your stop's number to 87287 or search 'bus tool' online." It shows illustrations of a smartphone, a bus, and a laptop. The bottom panel is titled "Quicker. Easier. Better." and includes the text: "Our new bus tool tells you when your next bus will arrive. It should save you hanging around. To use it, text your stop's number to 87287 or search 'bus tool' online." It also shows illustrations of a smartphone, a bus, and a laptop. At the bottom, there is a screenshot of the "Transport for London" website's "Live bus departures" page, showing a list of bus routes and a map.

### Hydrogen and hybrid buses

This execution consists of three identical panels stacked vertically. Each panel is titled "Cleaner. Greener. Better." and includes the text: "Our new hydrogen buses emit water vapour, and together with our hybrid buses have helped reduce emissions by over 30%. We're more environmentally friendly than ever." Each panel features a simple line drawing of a bus and a cloud with a raindrop falling into it. The panels are branded with "MAYOR OF LONDON" and "Transport for London".

### A new bus for London

This execution features two panels. The top panel is titled "Newer. Sleeker. Better." and includes the text: "Introducing London's Street Benchmark. The new bus for London, a welcome addition to our increasingly modern fleet." It shows a line drawing of a bus with a stylized London Underground roundel overlaid on its side. The bottom panel is a photograph of a red double-decker bus (number 23) in a dark setting, with a man in a suit standing next to it. The panels are branded with "MAYOR OF LONDON" and "Transport for London".

### Headline stretch

This execution features a single large panel titled "Buses from Harold Park" and "Simpler. Clearer. Better." It contains a detailed map of the Harold Park area with various bus routes highlighted in different colors. Below the map is a table of bus routes and their destinations. The panel is branded with "MAYOR OF LONDON" and "Transport for London".

## Stage 2: sample

- The research sample was constructed to represent a broad range of bus users across London – 8 x 1 hour focus groups

Group	Frequency	Life stages	Gender	SEG	Location
1	High	Pre Family	Equal Mix	C2DE	Inner London
2	High	Family	Equal Mix	ABC I	Outer London
3	High	Post Family	Equal Mix	C2DE	Inner London
4	Medium	Pre Family	Equal Mix	ABC I	Outer London
5	Medium	Family	Equal Mix	C2DE	Inner London
6	Medium	Post Family	Equal Mix	ABC I	Outer London
7	Low	Pre Family	Equal Mix	C2DE	Inner London
8	Low	Family	Equal Mix	ABC I	Outer London



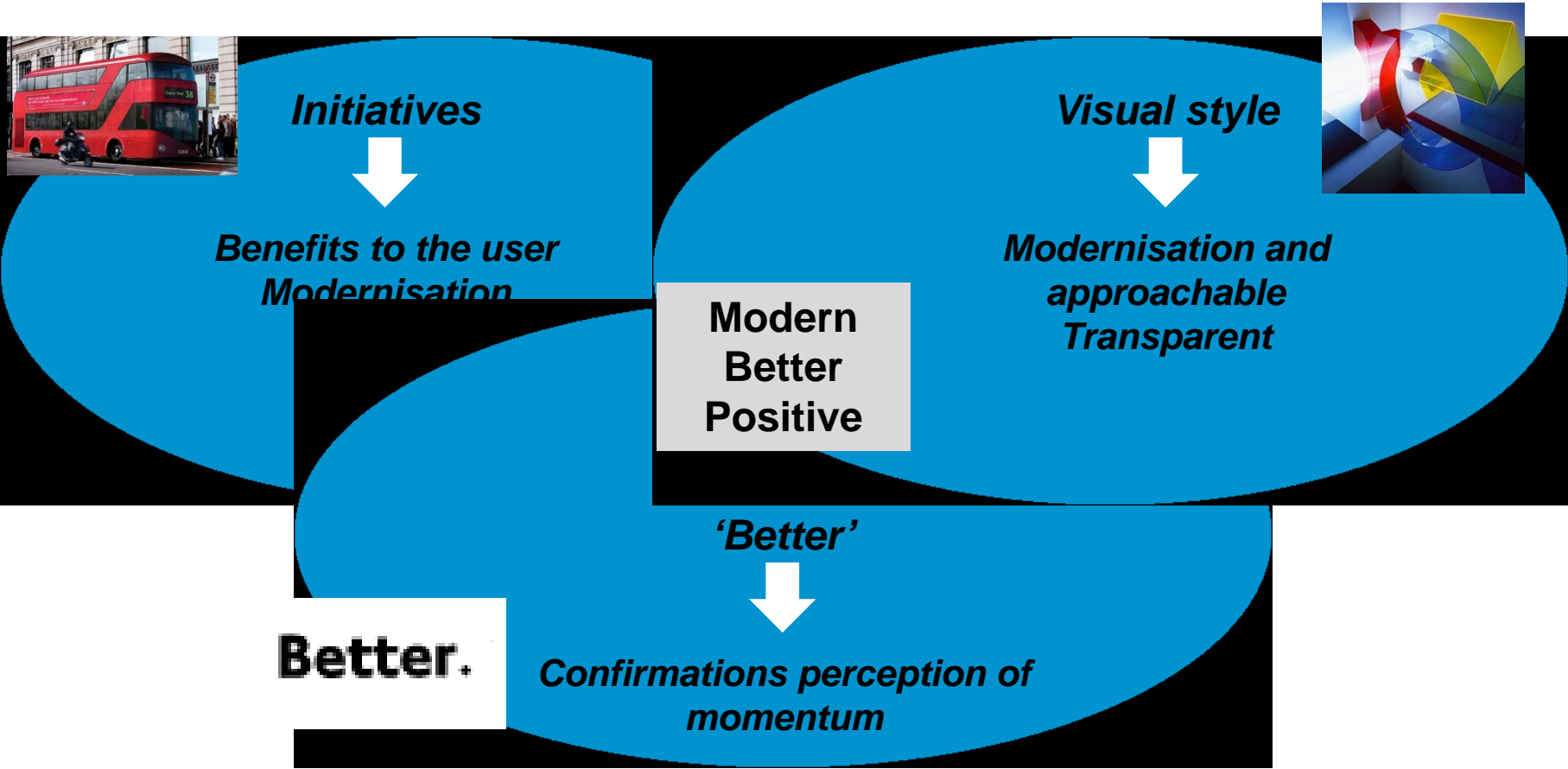
# Executive summary

## Executive summary

- On a campaign level the intended message of modernisation, progress and getting ‘better’ is being clearly communicated via:
  - The modern yet approachable visual style
  - The use of consumer language in ‘better’ and the three word headlines
- The USP of each works best when positioned as a benefit to the user / self:
  - ***Predicted bus time service*** – saves you waiting around for a bus
  - ***Hydrogen and hybrid buses*** – cleaner air for you / London
  - ***A new bus for London*** – a new bus designed for Londoners
- However, on a message level the USPs weren’t always fully communicated
  - People were sometimes forced to draw their own conclusions
  - USPs of initiatives could be made clearer to maximise brand momentum

## **Overall response to the campaign**

# All elements of the campaign converge together to create a sense of improvement



# Initiatives: each has a recognised user benefit

Southwark Station (SB) @ 10:46 - Bus stop code 11849

Route	To	Time
N89	Erith	due
N89	Erith	due
N63	Crystal Palace	due
100	Elephant & Castle	due
63	Honor Oak	2 mins
63	Honor Oak	3 mins
100	Elephant & Castle	3 mins
N89	Erith	4 mins
63	Honor Oak	5 mins
N63	Crystal Palace	6 mins

More:

- Refresh
- Filter routes
- Add to My Stops



## Predicted bus time service

- Has the potential to revolutionise how people use buses, provides information that can save you time waiting
- A potential benefit for all bus users

## Hydrogen and hybrid buses

- Promises an improvement to the air quality of London which would be able to be felt and seen

## A new bus for London

- A bus which has the needs of Londoners at the heart of its design, like the Routemaster was
- Reducing the need for the bendy buses which don't fit the needs of London

When communicating these benefits the USP needs to be made explicit and cohesively delivered throughout the imagery, copy and headline

## Visual style: forward looking yet approachable

- Communicates:
  - **Modern and fresh** – creative, interesting use of materials → says London Buses are modern and forward looking
  - **Accessible** – colourful, transparent, not elitist, disarming → plays up the everyman associations of buses
- Style enhances rather than overshadows the communication



*“Well the material is transparent isn’t, you don’t always associate that with the public sector”*  
Frequent, Post-family, Outer

*“The materials sound like they will be really nice when in the ads. Very smooth, modern and colourful”*  
Frequent, Pre-family, Inner

The style, which is modern and accessible, promotes the idea that buses are improving whilst not forgetting their role as London workhorses

## ‘Better’: works to describe how people feel about buses

- ‘Better’ chimes with how people talk about the improvements that they have already experienced
  - Not perfect but getting better
- The three word headlines represent the human side of London Buses, declaring a desire to improve the experience for customers / Londoners
  - Individual executions work best when these reflect the USP of the initiatives



*“All of these things show that they are better and moving with the times”*

Frequent, Post-family, Outer

*“Well they are better aren't they? Way better than they used to be”*

Medium, Family, Outer

The use of the word ‘better’ resonates universally and can positively influence brand momentum, but only when associated with USPs of the initiative

## Headline stretch: potential to use across other activity

- The headline can be used across other initiatives / communication if they can satisfy the following criteria:

Does it reflect a change, progress or improvement in the mind of customers?

Does it reflect a benefit / USP which is felt by all?

- In the Harold Park example some customers thought the 'Simpler. Clearer. Better.' strapline lacked synergy as:
  - The map looks the same as what already exists
  - Some of the less familiar users found the maps confusing



If maps can satisfy the above criteria then the headline can be applied



# **Predicted bus time service**

## Predicted bus time service: engaging to all, clear personal benefit

- Generates a lot of enthusiasm
  - Information a key driver of brand momentum
- All customers try to imagine scenarios for use
  - For everyday usage in outer London
  - For unfamiliar journeys in Inner London
- A key element of appeal is the multiple platform access (SMS, mobile internet and desktop internet)
  - But, this was often missed, some copy and imagery can bias towards phone usage



*“Out of all the three ideas this is the one which works. The information is useful for me right now”*

Medium, Family, Inner

*“I hate waiting for buses so I would like to know roughly how long I’ll wait and whether its worth walking to the next stop”*

High, Post-family, Inner

All elements of the execution need to reflect the multi-platform nature of the service

## Headline: no clear winner, elements of each liked

### Quicker. Easier. Better.

- 'Quicker' is liked but questioned
  - Actual journey isn't quicker
- 'Easier' has only positive associations
  - Bus network is easier to use
  - Information is easier to come by

*"Why would it be quicker? I can't see how its any quicker"*

High, Post-family, Inner

*"Is handier even a word? I like what they are trying to get at with it being handy on your mobile but I'm not sure about that word"*

Frequent, Post family, Inner

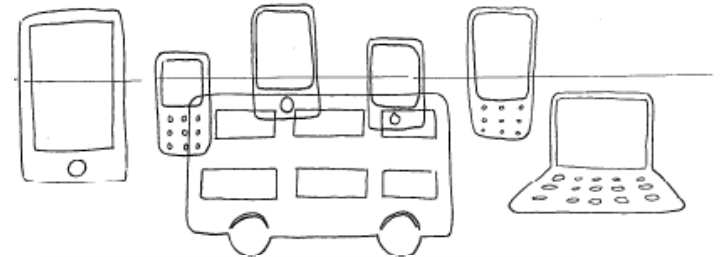
### Handier. Smarter. Better.

- 'Handier' and 'Smarter' makes people think of mobile phones but have slightly different connotations
- 'Smarter' = smartphone
  - Liked as it suggests the user has made the smart choice
  - "I like smarter it sounds like you are being smarter"
- 'Handier' = handset
  - Word jarred "I don't know what it is but I just find the sound of the word handier a bit weird"

A headline which takes the best from both could work to communicate the benefits of the service

## Imagery: visual relates well to message, but biased towards phones

- Devices recognised and clearly communicates that this is a bus related technology service that you can access on various devices
- But, appears as a predominantly phone based service
  - Shows five phones and one laptop
- Those who are more comfortable using a PC when seeking information feel that this is aimed at a younger / more tech savvy audience than them



*"It looks like they are up with the latest gadgets"*  
Infrequent, Pre-family, Outer

*"This is a young person's thing they might do on their phone"*  
Frequent, Post-family, Outer

A need to communicate that this initiative can be accessed on multiple platforms

## Copy: recognises USP, but cues to an SMS based service

- ‘Save you hanging around’ recognises the USP and makes it relevant to the reader
- Information biased towards SMS
  - Can confuse over targeting – too old for younger people and too young for older people (see quotes)
  - Many expect SMS service to be free as it may be used frequently
- Semantically the bias relegates online to an information search rather than the service itself

Our new bus tool tells you when your next bus will arrive. It should save you hanging around. To use it, text your stop's number to 87287 or search 'bus tool' online.

*"I would want an app for something like this, will there be one?"*

Medium, Pre-family, Outer

*"It works better for young people because they are used to using their phones for everything"*

Medium, Family, Inner

*"If they did it on an app that would be good. But texting is old, its not modern, its for people with old mobiles"*

Low, Pre-family, Inner

As with the imagery there is a need to communicate that this initiative can be accessed on multiple platforms

# Banner ad: user benefit currently unclear

## Execution

- Animation plays on some of the light and movement that is inherent with the 3D treatment – brings campaign to life

*"I wouldn't need the service when I'm on the internet"*  
Medium, Pre-family, Inner

*"This is for when I need to get a bus there and then. Which could be useful maybe"*  
Medium, Pre-family, Outer

## Copy

- Absence of reference to USP and customer benefit of the tool leads people to draw their own conclusions about the purpose of the ad



## Call to action

- Understood that the ad was asking them to click to find out more
- But, there is a disconnect between their web surfing and needing a bus
- People question why the number to text isn't shown

*"I would be more likely to store the number to use another time"*  
Frequent, Post family, Outer

Referencing the USP would sharpen the intended message

## Naming: audiences are seeking a descriptive name

- As the tool is new it is important that the name works hard to communicate how the service works and what the benefits might be:

### *Countdown*

- Doesn't communicate what the service is
  - Countdown to what?
  - Doesn't indicate its for buses and when you might use it
- When seen in isolation associated with the gameshow and feels stressful / time pressured

### *Next Bus*

- A natural way of talking about the service which describes how people would use it and the benefit
  - I.e. it lets you know when the next bus is
- More closely aligned with how people might search online
- More casual and welcoming,

Of the two names Next Bus is closest to the user benefit of the service

# Web tool: builds upon the perception of buses becoming more modern

- When viewed in the context of groups, people broadly understand how the service might work
- Fits with information expectations and imagined usage
  - Builds upon existing information drivers

*"This is what I would expect, it looks quite similar to the journey planner"*  
 Frequent, Family, Outer

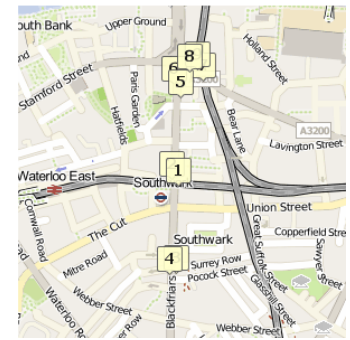
*"The map looks a little bit confusing at the moment but I'm sure when I use it will be different"*  
 Medium, Post-family, Outer

*"This looks like the information you see at bus stops"*  
 Medium, Family, Inner

*"It looks like it would have the type of information I would expect"*  
 Medium, Pre-family, Outer

## Stops near 'Southwark (SE1 8)'

- Page 1
- 1 Southwark Station (SB) towards ELEPHANT & CASTLE. 45, 63, 100, N63, N89
  - 2 Southwark Station (SA) towards KING'S CROSS OR LIVERPOOL STREET. 45, 63, 100, N63, N89
  - 3 Pockock Street (W) towards BRICKLAYERS ARMS OR CAMBERWELL GREEN. 45, 63, 100, N63, N89
  - 4 Pockock Street (V) towards BLACKFRIARS. 45, 63, 100, N63, N89
  - 5 Stamford Street (SC) towards ELEPHANT & CASTLE. 45, 63, 100, N63, N89
  - 6 Stamford Street (SD) towards KING'S CROSS OR LIVERPOOL STREET. 45, 63, 100, N63, N89
  - 7 Southwark Street / Blackfriars Road towards ROYAL FESTIVAL HALL. RV1
  - 8 Blackfriars Road (SL) towards WATERLOO. 381, N343, N381



## Southwark Station (SB) @ 10:46 - Bus stop code 11849

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- More...
- ▶ Refresh
  - ▶ Filter routes
  - ▶ Add to My Stops



**Has potential to deliver the information required to drive brand momentum**



# Hydrogen and hybrid buses

# Headline and copy: copy could go further to communicate USP

## Cleaner. Greener. Better.

- Works well as ‘cleaner’ and ‘greener’ to reference the local impact of the new buses
  - Cleaner alludes to the visceral, on the street, benefits of improved bus engines

*“Its clean for the environment but also means the air will be cleaner”*

Low, Pre-family, Inner

*“At the moment buses chuck out loads of fumes which are really horrible. Cleaning them can only be a good thing”*

Frequent, Family, Outer

Our new hydrogen buses emit water vapour, and together with our hybrid buses have helped reduce emissions by over 30%. We're more environmentally friendly than ever.

- Helps communicate the reduced emissions
  - Statistic adds some credibility and demonstrates progress
  - Copy is essential for the decoding of the cloud imagery
- But, just talking about emissions is intangible – current absence of cleaner air within copy

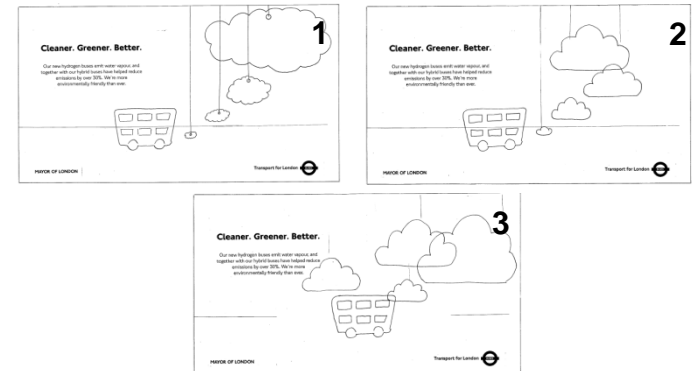
*“I’m not environmentally friendly so this doesn’t work for me”*

Medium, Post-family, Inner

Copy needs to work harder to communicate the benefit of the new buses on the lives of Londoners

# Imagery: vapour not always read as clean air

- Can be taken as pollution coming from the bus
  - People struggle to imagine what a clean cloud might look like - “are these good or bad clouds?”
  - Copy needs to be read and understood that the intension is water vapour
  - Of the options 2 worked better - clouds are more stylised and benefit linked to the bus
- Beyond this, not felt to visually reference cleaner air or London



*“I’d like to see the view from Blackheath or Parliament Hill or something showing the clear air”*  
Medium, Pre-family, Outer

*“You just used to pollution being the thing coming out of the back of the bus”*  
Frequent, Pre-family, Inner

*“If there were daises or flowers or something else the picture that would give you a bit more of a clue of what they are talking about”*  
Frequent, Post-family, Inner

Visual could work harder to communicate clean air USP

# **A new bus for London**

## Headline: communicates newness

### Newer. Sleeker. Better.

- Clearly demonstrates that London Buses are being upgraded
- In isolation it can seem self congratulatory – TFL have nice new buses but what's in it for me?
  - In order to communicate the USP adequately the headline needs to be complimented by imagery and copy which sell in the customer benefits

*"A new bus is still just a bus. Is it going to make it more likely run on time? Will it be cleaner and safer? At the end of the day these are the things that really matter to me"*

Frequent, Post family, Inner

*"I don't think it really says what's in it for me. The bus looks nice but how's it going to make my journey any better?"*

Frequent, Pre-family, Inner

*"How many of these are there likely to be? I think it's unlikely that we'll get any of these buses out here"*

Infrequent, Family, Outer

*"I think it shows that they are putting money into the London buses"*

Frequent, Pre-family, Inner

**Headline would need to work together with the copy and imagery to communicate that the new bus has been designed with the needs of Londoners in mind**

## Copy: communicates modern, but not the user benefit

- The copy adequately communicates the bus's modern credentials leading to perceptions that the bus will be cleaner and technologically superior
- But, it fails tap into the heritage of London Buses, usability or aspects of its suitability for London streets
- Can fail to communicate why it is deserves classification as a London landmark in its own right, rather than just as part of the London bus fleet

Introducing London's latest landmark. The new bus for London, a welcome addition to our increasingly modern fleet.

*"I think the advert fits with a forward looking, futuristic [perspective] and shows that the buses are modern but I have to say I didn't get it straight away, not until you showed me it's the new Routemaster"*

Infrequent, Family, Outer

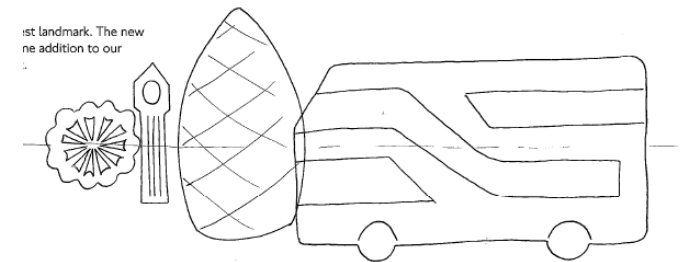
*"If it is supposed to be the replacement for the Routemaster why don't they just say so?"*

Frequent, Pre-family, Outer

**Making the new bus a London landmark depends on communicating what makes this bus uniquely suited to the city**

# Imagery: bus currently unfamiliar and USP not communicated

- Comparing the bus to other landmarks taps into local pride, but lacks credibility as it is currently unknown
  - Many struggled to understand what the choice of landmarks were saying about the new bus, and vice versa
- User benefit of ‘a bus designed for Londoners’ absent - ‘Hop on, hop off’ is powerful emotional hook and link to London Buses heritage



*“I’d be interested to know if its hop on hop off or not”*  
Low, Pre-family, Inner

*“I think they could’ve chosen better landmarks. What has the London Eye got to do with this new bus?”*  
Medium, Pre-family, Outer

*“I’m not really sure that these are the right landmarks to use. I mean, the Millennium wheel and Gherkin are only about 10 years old.”*  
Medium, Family, Inner

**Emphasis of the USP of the new bus makes it more than just another new bus**

# Summary



## Executive summary

- On a campaign level the intended message of modernisation, progress and getting ‘better’ is being clearly communicated via:
  - The modern yet approachable visual style
  - The use of consumer language in ‘better’ and the three word headlines
- The USP of each works best when positioned as a benefit to the user / self:
  - *Predicted bus time service* – saves you waiting around for a bus
  - *Hydrogen and hybrid buses* – cleaner air for you / London
  - *A new bus for London* – a new bus designed for Londoners
- However, on a message level the USPs weren’t always fully communicated
  - People were sometimes forced to draw their own conclusions
  - USPs of initiatives could be made clearer to maximise brand momentum