



PRESS RELEASE

Date: Friday 28th March 2008

Release: **Immediate**

BORIS JOHNSON: MAKING LONDON SAFER AND MORE ACCESSIBLE FOR SENIOR CITIZENS

Today, the Conservative Candidate for Mayor of London, Boris Johnson, unveiled his latest manifesto – ‘Appreciating Our Seniors’, pledging to protect the Freedom Pass and make London safer for older Londoners.

The proposal to protect and extend the Freedom Pass, by working with local councils to make it valid every hour of every day, is the central plank of a raft of proposals to allow older Londoners to live their lives fully and freely.

This promise is backed up with a commitment to make London safer for the one million plus pensioners who live in London, including increasing safety on buses and Charing the Metropolitan Police Authority.

Other pledges include making London age friendly and fighting to preserve essential public services that have been put under threat of closure by Labour and Ken Livingstone.

Boris Johnson, who launched the manifesto at a Mayoral hustings organised by Age Concern, said:

“London must be made more age-friendly, and I say unequivocally that I will protect and extend the Freedom Pass to make it valid 24 hours a day.

“As Mayor I will make it my number one priority to tackle crime and return a feeling of safety to our streets, to ensure that *everyone* can participate in the life, culture and economy of the greatest city on earth – regardless of their age or the neighbourhood they live in. For many older Londoners, a fear of crime prevents them from living their lives fully and freely.

“I will also campaign tirelessly to stop the proposed closure of London’s post offices and hospitals, which are so important to the senior community.

“Ken Livingstone has spent the last eight years ignoring the concerns of senior citizens in London and it is time for a change. My manifesto will make London safer and easier to live in for the older people who live here. Under my Mayoralty I am certain that London will become a city that cares for and acknowledges its older citizens.”

ENDS

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Notes to Editors

Protecting the Freedom Pass

One in three Londoners is aged over 55, and as people get older mobility can become a bigger concern.^[1] At the moment the Freedom Pass cannot be used between 4.30am and 9am, meaning it is more difficult for elderly people to make early morning appointments with, for instance, their local GP. Last year Transport for London (TfL) – which is chaired by Ken Livingstone – threatened future funding for the Freedom Pass.^[2] This uncertainty must stop.

For those who are entitled to the Freedom Pass, **I will protect it as an untouchable right**, and I will, unlike the current Labour Mayor, work with the borough councils (who fund it) to make it operational for 24 hours a day.

^[1] Age Concern, Submission on the London Housing Strategy, 2005-2016, February 2005.

^[2] Freedom Pass Safe In Our Hands, London Councils, 30 January 2007.

Read Boris Johnson's manifesto for London's senior citizens here:

http://www.backboris.com/assets/complete_seniors.pdf

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