

Transport for London unveils memorial design for London's transport workers who tragically lost their lives to coronavirus

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Transport for London (TfL) has released designs for a new permanent memorial to London's transport workers who have tragically lost their lives to coronavirus.

The new memorial will be created on a pedestrian plaza on Braham Street in Aldgate. The space will contain a plaque paying tribute to London's transport workers as well as benches to allow quiet reflection and remembrance. A cherry blossom tree will also be planted, echoing the new public garden of blossom trees created in the Queen Elizabeth Olympic Park to commemorate all Londoners who lost their lives to coronavirus.

Tragically, 98 transport workers who helped to keep London moving during the pandemic have passed away from coronavirus. TfL is also aware of a number of taxi and private hire drivers who have sadly died and, alongside trade bodies, continue to offer their families support.

Their loss has been devastating for all at TfL, and the permanent memorial will pay tribute to the critical

role they played in London's fight against this global pandemic. Last week the Transport Commissioner wrote to the families of those who worked on TfL services and had died of coronavirus to offer his personal condolences and to share the plans for the memorial.

The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, said: "I am devastated that 98 London transport workers have died from Covid, and each and every one of them will always be in my thoughts. As the son of a bus driver, this is deeply personal to me, and I can't help but think how it could have been my dad or his colleagues or friends.

"I hope that the new permanent memorial in the middle of our city will be a place where those that have lost loved ones will find solace, and be a reminder of the heroic key workers who have made it possible for us to come through the pandemic by keeping our city moving."

London's Transport Commissioner, Andy Byford, said: "I would like to express my sincere condolences to the families and loved ones of all transport workers across London who have sadly lost their lives to coronavirus. Their tragic loss is devastating for us all, we owe them our gratitude and this memorial will ensure that we never forget them.

"I also want to personally thank all front-line staff on our bus, Tube and rail services who kept our city moving through the dark period through which London has come, the maintenance teams who kept the network safe, the taxi and private hire drivers who helped people continue to attend hospital appointments during the pandemic and all the cleaners who ensured the network is clean and safe to use. Without you - the city could not have got through the pandemic."

Mayor of Tower Hamlets, John Biggs said: "TfL staff have been dedicated in keeping our city moving through the pandemic and we owe them a debt of gratitude for their service to Londoners. Very sadly a number of transport workers have passed away due to coronavirus, it's fitting that we remember them with this memorial and my sincere condolences go out to their families. Next week in Tower Hamlets we will also be holding a number of events to mark the pandemic and remember those who have lost their lives to this virus."

Following feedback from the families of those who died, TfL aims to submit a planning application to Tower Hamlets Council for the memorial by early 2022. Subject to approvals, TfL aims to deliver the memorial as quickly as possible so it can be formally unveiled by summer 2022.

For more information about the memorial garden, please visit <https://tfl.gov.uk/campaign/coronavirus>

Photo credit: Transport for London