

Dangerous rush hour crowding putting key workers at risk



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- Dangerous overcrowding on the Tube at rush hour is increasing risk
- Already limited services are being squeezed as TfL workers are getting sick
- Employers and the Government must act to stop non-essential travel

Green Party co-leader Sian Berry has called for action to tackle dangerous overcrowding during rush hour, which is putting key workers at risk.

Overcrowding on Transport for London services is rising as already-limited services are squeezed by growing numbers of transport workers off sick or in self-isolation.

Ms Berry called on employers to immediately close their businesses if they were not essential.

Employers providing essential services must look at staggering office hours, she added, to minimise rush hour overcrowding.

She said: "Most Londoners cannot afford to live near their jobs, and I don't think anyone is lightly getting on the tube at peak times who doesn't think they need to be at work.

"So non-key employers must close and minimise staff. Remaining key employers need to work immediately, starting today with the ends of shifts, on plans to stagger start times and end times so we can stop this dangerous crowding."

Ms Berry said it was clear some non-essential employers were failing to close, so further measures may be necessary to keep public transport free for key workers.

"We must be considering next steps like controlled entry to the tube, restricting it just to key workers," she said. "Work IDs for vital staff such as cleaners and shop workers should be issued today in preparation for this possibility.

"There are resource and practical questions with any further measures. Even more TfL staff, and police, would be needed for controlled entry to the tube – and queues and disorder at stations would also be a risk to be considered. This is not easy."

Ms Berry also reiterated the need for more support for workers who are not directly employed who may be going to work for fear of losing their incomes, and called again for a universal basic income:

"Once again we need full support, and conversion of benefits into a universal

basic income, for all employees, contractors and the self employed now.

“Even if only a fraction stay working because they can’t risk lost incomes, every person adds to the overcrowding risk. Partial schemes mean partial compliance.”

ENDS

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