

I'm human





London's transportation history is fascinating, with its extensive tram network covering large parts of the city in the 1950s to make way for buses and cars. The main reason for this was the perceived old-fashioned nature of trams, combined with criticism over their noise levels and safety concerns. A Royal Commission recommended replacing trams with trolleybuses in 1931, which led to London Transport adopting the policy. The conversion program began in 1935, resulting in half of London's trams being scrapped by 1940. Despite this decline, many cities worldwide faced similar challenges, such as low ridership and financial losses. The demise of tram systems can be seen in cities like Patna, Nasik, and Cawnpore in India, where tram services were discontinued due to these issues. Liverpool and Leeds also followed suit. However, some places still have trams today, including parts of south London operated by Tramlink. Interestingly, Bristol's tram operations ceased in 1941 due to the Luftwaffe's air raids during the Bristol Blitz. Glasgow's trams faced competition from private cars and buses after the First World War, leading to their decline as well. While trams may have disappeared from London's streets, they are still a mode of transportation in various cities worldwide, including Edinburgh, Dublin, Manchester, and Sheffield, which have successful tram systems catering to residents' needs. Tram systems were once a common sight in many cities worldwide but are now largely absent from urban landscapes. Blackpool Tramway, however, remains as the only surviving tram system in England. In London, travelers must use Oyster cards, contactless payments, or valid tickets to ride trams, indicating their cash-free nature. Trolleybuses never gained traction in the UK due to growing preference for personal vehicles and fossil fuels, but electric public transport is being reconsidered. London's iconic red buses originated from early 20th-century liveries, becoming synonymous with the city's transportation scene. Melbourne boasts the world's largest tram system, spanning over 250 kilometers with 487 trams running on its tracks. The decline of trams can be attributed to rising automobile ownership and financial burdens. As cities prioritized car-friendly infrastructure, many removed their tram lines in favor of roads. Tram systems require dedicated tracks and specialized maintenance costs, making them less feasible in times of budget constraints. While cost was a factor, changing transportation trends and increasing car popularity also played significant roles in the removal of trams. The impact of tram removals on public transportation varied across cities, depending on the alternatives implemented. While some cities experienced increased congestion and decreased accessibility following tram removals, others saw more modern and efficient public transportation systems emerge. Several cities have successfully reintroduced tram systems as part of efforts to promote sustainable and efficient public transportation. These cities recognized the benefits of trams in reducing car usage and alleviating traffic congestion, leading to a resurgence of tram services. Cities like Sydney, which removed its tram system in the 1960s, are notable examples of this trend. The city's decision was influenced by British experts who recommended replacing trams with buses, citing London's success in resolving its traffic problem through this method. However, this narrative has been disputed, as data shows that patronage declined by 30% when trams were replaced with buses. The actual reason for tram removals was competition from private bus operators, which emerged after World War I. These operators could "cherry pick" passengers from tram stops without adhering to a timetable. Regulation was introduced in 1932 to address this issue. Additionally, car manufacturers and Members of Parliament with vested interests played a significant role in driving the removal of trams. In contrast, cities like those in Germany and France retained their tram systems, recognizing their value in reducing traffic congestion. Today, over 27 tram lines have been reinstalled in France, acknowledging the errors of the past. The replacement of trams with buses did not necessarily lead to increased usage, as people opted for cars instead. In cities like London, Liverpool, and Leeds, the introduction of modern buses led to a 30% decline in patronage as individuals switched to personal vehicles or alternative modes of transport. Local councils' failure to set aside funds for track and equipment renewal, instead using tram profits to offset rates, contributed to the decline of tramways. By the 1930s, many tramways had deteriorated, making bus replacement the most cost-effective option. The surviving tramways were neglected during wartime and eventually closed in the 1940s or 1950s. Regulatory changes in the 1950s and 1960s, such as relaxed parking restrictions, also contributed to increased car ownership and congestion. As suburban development expanded, car use became more necessary for commuting, further reducing the viability of tram and bus services. However, trams' fixed routes can be beneficial, providing a stable transportation option that attracts investment and development. In areas with established tram networks, residents and businesses can rely on consistent service, much like the London Tube network, where lines were built to accommodate growing populations. The abandonment of tram routes often led to decreased property values and reduced economic activity. Dispersed populations led to increased car ownership and urban commuting, causing bus usage patterns to decline by about 1.5% annually since 1955. A significant drop occurred during a six-week bus strike in 1958, which the industry never recovered from. The market for trams shrunk as other tramways closed due to nationalization of electricity suppliers in 1948 and the lack of cheap power. Valentine, a London Transport Executive member, viewed trams as a major contributor to road congestion, which buses could alleviate with their introduction. Factors contributing to the decline of trams included the Tramways Act of 1870, narrow streets, distant housing developments, and prejudice against trams from authorities. The high cost of replacing infrastructure and updating worn-out trams made it more feasible to replace them with diesel buses, as seen in "Operation Tramaway" announced by Lord Latham in July 1950. The last tram ran on July 6, 1952, but no significant improvement in traffic flow was observed after their withdrawal. A turning point was reached when the decision was made to abandon trams and replace them with modern buses. This transition occurred by 1979, resulting in a significant decline in passenger numbers and an operating loss for the bus service. The subsequent rise in car ownership led to congestion in Leeds. It wasn't until many years later that the accounts of Leeds tramway were thoroughly examined, revealing that the costs of repairing and storing the replacement bus fleets had been unfairly charged to remaining tram routes, making them appear unprofitable. Further investigation uncovered a connection between a senior official at Leeds tramways and a prominent lorry and bus engine manufacturer, who designed new trams with increased track wear. The closure of Liverpool's thriving tram system was similarly abrupt, occurring on the chairman's casting vote despite a petition signed by 240,000 people calling for its preservation. The aftermath saw former tram users buying cars and contributing to city congestion. A scholarly publication titled "Liverpool Transport" covers the period during which the decision to abandon trams was made (1948). In contrast, Bristol Tramways have continued to evolve since their initial opening in 1875, with expansions and fare adjustments demonstrating the company's entrepreneurial spirit. The system has grown through various extensions and innovations, including the introduction of steam engines and the eventual shift to horses on some routes. By 1889, the number of passengers carried by tramcar had increased dramatically from 564,284 to 5,026,837. Future plans aim to seek powers for large-scale tramway expansions in different parts of the city. The Bristol Tram System's Decline and Reversal In the late 19th century, Bristol underwent significant changes with the introduction of tramways, transforming travel across the city. The system expanded to cover eleven miles, making it one of the most comprehensive in the country. Fast forward to the present day, and sadly we have regressed to a similar situation that existed in 1858. Despite having had the opportunity to modernize and expand the network, the tram system has been abandoned in Bristol and Bath. A brief analysis reveals that several factors contributed to this decision. Firstly, the tramway company was not incentivized to upgrade the system due to its eligibility for purchase by the council every seven years. This led to a lack of investment in modernizing the infrastructure. In 1937, the council and tramway company formed Bristol Joint Services, agreeing to phase out the tram system over two years. The decision was largely driven by logistical considerations, as only two remaining tram services were operational at the time. The abandonment of trams was further complicated by the destruction of the main cable due to a bomb, which delayed the process. However, this had little bearing on the outcome, as the trams would have been replaced by buses anyway. In contrast, Bath's tram system faced similar challenges, including worn-out infrastructure and traffic congestion in narrow streets. The introduction of buses proved more convenient, particularly in areas like Lansdown and Ralph Allen Drive, which were too steep for trams. The decision to abandon Bath's tram system was also influenced by the 1985 Transport Act, which led to Bristol City Council giving up its share of joint bus operations. The city council decided not to pursue its option to purchase Bath Electric Tramways and the Bath Tramways Motor Company, instead opting for Bristol Tramways to buy the system. The agreement to abandon the tramway system was signed on July 27, 1937, due to the system being "life expired" and buses being cheaper to operate at the time. This decision was largely driven by the need to cut costs, as the council's accounting system did not allow for replacement equipment. Additionally, the bus company, Bristol Tramways & Carriage Company, also built buses, which likely played a factor in the decision. Despite initial opposition from the public, there was ultimately little appetite to reintroduce trams to Bath after World War II due to logistical challenges and the emergence of modern transportation options. The author reminisces about a time when they attempted to start a commotion in a Birmingham bus queue by questioning the tram service. However, this incident never came to fruition as people were too apathetic towards changing their transportation systems. In contrast, others have shared their own experiences with Lansdown Hill and the MoD site at Enleigh. One person recalls being turned back by a police officer due to hazardous road conditions in the 1960s and 1970s. Regarding the heated tram rails on Lansdown Hill, an individual questioned the validity of this claim, citing that they have never heard of such a feature. The original source for this information is from an article in the Bath Chronicle, but unfortunately, no reference is provided. It's suggested that the cost of the heated stretch was absorbed by the local rates. The topic of trams and their comparison to buses has also sparked debate among experts. A highly qualified electrical design engineer, Adrian Tuddenham, shares his knowledge on the subject, emphasizing the advantages of tram systems over buses. He attributes his understanding to various sources, including historical texts and conversations with individuals who have used trams in the past. The closure of the Bath trams has been attributed to a combination of factors, including their ownership by the Bristol bus company and the council's control over tram fares. The bus company's ability to set higher fares when replacing trams with buses further contributed to the decline of the tram system. Additionally, the lack of investment in track and equipment replacement due to the enforced low fares and the possibility of the council taking over the tram at any time hindered the tramway company's efforts. The article also touches on the experiences of other cities, such as France and Berlin, where trams have been removed or re-installed in response to changing transportation needs. In France, over 33 trams have been re-installed to alleviate congestion and revitalize town centers. Similarly, West Berlin is re-installing its tram network after noting the reduced congestion in East Berlin following reunification. Sydney's tram system was once one of the largest in the world, carrying over a million people daily. However, it was abandoned in the early 1960s, and the authorities soon regretted their decision as congestion worsened. Melbourne, which retained its tram system, is now celebrated for being an excellent city to get around due to its efficient public transportation network. Sydney's tram system was once a thriving mode of transportation, but by the 1950s it had started to decline. The city's trams were initially powered by steam, with the first electric trams introduced in 1898. However, as railpage.com.au notes, most of the system was converted from steam to electricity by 1910. By the late 1950s, the tram system began to close down section by section, with the last tram running in 1961 - exactly 100 years after the first city tram opened. The decision to shut down the trams was likely due to a combination of factors, including better efficiency, crowded roads, and the presence of horse-drawn carts. In recent years, there have been efforts to revitalize Sydney's public transportation system, with a new tram system expected to be completed within three years. However, not everyone is convinced that this will solve the city's transportation woes. As David Holt notes, the decline of trams in the UK was likely due to a combination of factors, including the focus on rubber tyres and internal combustion engines after World War I, as well as class-obsessed Britons' preference for private cars over trams. Holt also suggests that sheer bone idleness on the part of decision-makers may have contributed to the failure to properly commit to trams in the past. Trams are often seen as "difficult" to implement and maintain, which has led to a lack of investment in this mode of transportation. This is compounded by British snobbery towards trams, which shows no signs of abating. According to Holt, buses have become attractive to lazy public transport providers due to their perceived ease of use and maintenance compared to trams. However, as Holt notes, the drawbacks of relying on buses are numerous, including the lack of a fixed route or schedule, which can leave passengers feeling undervalued and disregarded. Disasters for tramway recognition come in many forms, but some of the most damaging are those that perpetuate the myth that only expensive advice or information is valuable. This outdated British convention not only wastes vast amounts on dead-end consultancy fees but also ignores anyone offering input without a price tag. The recent demise of Smarter Cambridge serves as a stark reminder of this problem, with its failure to prevent the destruction of public trust and goodwill through frustrating surveys and tin-eared consultations. It's an uphill battle indeed, but acknowledging what we're truly up against would be a good starting point. In fact, London's tramways were abandoned due to the policy of the LPTB, which prioritized "more flexible" trolleybuses and diesel buses over renewing the tramway infrastructure. The LPTB was dominated by its Underground Railways and motorbus constituents, marginalizing the interests of the tramway operators. Even when much of the infrastructure was still in good condition, the LPTB preferred to build extensions to the underground network instead. The 1931 Royal Commission on Transport had already declared that tramways were obsolescent, effectively sealing their fate. This was further exacerbated by other factors, such as the high running costs and the tendency for public grants to be seen as a dominant factor until assets need replacing. Ian Yearsley's analysis of company versus municipal financing of tramways revealed that when municipal tramways generated a surplus, it was often absorbed into the Council's general funds or used to reduce domestic rates - mostly benefiting those who didn't use the trams much. The LCC would have covered all tram replacement costs if it had run its tramway independently, with a 4% average annual dividend paid to the council. The notion of 'subsidy' actually harmed tram survival. Tramways today are largely unique and mostly municipally owned, making fare-setting more about politics than market conditions. This artificially set pricing didn't help private US tramways or UK railways in 1938 when they sought commercial rate-setting freedom. However, it wasn't until the 1968 Transport Act that this change came to fruition. Staff wages account for approximately 60% of operating costs, followed by power costs, maintenance, and repairs. Assets are valued based on their expected lifespan and depreciation methods, with inflation affecting overall value. For instance, SY Supertram's initial cost of £250m in 1992-1995 now needs a similar amount to merely replace its worn tracks, due to rising asset values over time. The original trams are three decades old, while newer 'tram-trains' for the Rotherham extension cost £4m each.

Why did trams disappear. Why did they get rid of trams. Why were trams removed from brisbane. Why were trams removed from kolkata. Why were trams removed from sydney. Why were trams made. Why were trams removed from mumbai. Why were trams removed from london.