

# NEWS AND NOTES

## 1938 TUBE STOCK ON TOUR

Marketed as celebrating the 90th anniversary of the opening of the Piccadilly Line's eastern extensions, three special return trips operated between Acton Town and Oakwood on Sunday 9 July 2023, as timetabled below. The reason for terminating the trips at Oakwood was that all platforms are required for use at Cockfosters on a daily basis.

Acton Town	10.12	14.23	18.43
Oakwood	11.10	15.21	19.21
Oakwood	11.57	16.17	20.17
Acton Town	12.55	17.16	21.15

The eastern extensions opened as follows:

19.09.32 – Finsbury Park to Arnos Grove

05.03.33 – Arnos Grove to Enfield West (today's Oakwood)

31.07.33 – Enfield West to Cockfosters



**Opposite:** One of the test runs to Uxbridge on 5 July 2023, (Centre Left) seen in the eastbound platform at South Harrow. On 9 July 2023, passing Hyde Park Corner westbound (Centre Right) and approaching Southgate tunnel (Lower Left) – note the current rail gap on the eastbound to the left at Southgate substation. Passing westbound through Finsbury Park (Lower Right) which was, until 1964, the former northbound arrival platform for the Northern City Line.

**Photos:** Keith West (Opposite Centre Left) and Keith Ward (all other photos)



**Previous Page:** Then and now views of 1938 Tube Stock emerging from the east end of Southgate tunnel, with 66 years separating the two photos, that at the top being on 23 March 1957 and that at the bottom on 9 July 2023.

**Photos:** Alan A. Jackson (Top), Fraser Hay (Lower)

**MAIL RAIL UPDATE**

In the February 2023 issue of *Underground News*, we reported that Adrian Shooter CBE had passed away aged 74 years. He is especially well known as the founder of the very successful Chiltern Railways and later as the Chairman of Vivarail.

At his home in Steeple Aston, he had a 2ft-gauge railway based on the Darjeeling and Himalayan Railway, along with locomotives and rolling stock. Moreover, he also acquired four trains from Mail Rail, the Post Office Railway, which ceased to operate in 2003. Two of the trains (38, ex-761 and 42, ex-806) went to the Launceston Steam Railway. The bogies from 42 were adapted for their Railcar project and the remains of the train was scrapped, while 38 remains on display.

The other two trains (37, ex-760 and 44, ex-812) remained at Steeple Aston and 37 was modified to run on Adrian's railway, achieved by regauging from the POR's 2ft to Adrian's Darjeeling and Himalayan Railway's 1ft 11<sup>5</sup>/<sub>8</sub> – just <sup>3</sup>/<sub>8</sub> of an inch less to make it run on the Beeches Light Railway without derailing on points. The Society was honoured in being granted a visit on 26 April 2009 and the photos (*Below*) show the Mail Rail car, by then repainted green.

**Both photos: Brian Hardy**



The late Adrian Shooter's Darjeeling & Himalayan Railway loco 19B was bought at auction on 21 June 2023 by the Darjeeling Tank Locomotive Trust and has been moved to the Statfold Barn Railway near Tamworth, along with the two replica carriages.

Also at Statfold is Mail Rail car 809 from the National Railway Museum (*Below, Right*), photographed on 10 June 2023. Mail Rail car 37 and the two bogies of 44 from Beeches Light Railway have gone to a Beeches Light Railway team member for a project in line with earlier discussions with Adrian. All four bogies are seen together on 15 July 2023 (*Below, Left*).

**Photos: Jeremy Davey (Left) and Phil Wimbusch (Right)**



Returning to the Post Office Railway, the area around Mount Pleasant is now part of the "Mail Rail Experience", which meant that any stock left in the depot had to be moved out and stored elsewhere, many of them on the westbound line east of Mount Pleasant. Because of Crossrail construction work, the 18 stored trains of 1930-36 Stock also had to be moved out from the disused tunnel at Rathbone Place and were stabled at and around West Central District Office at High Holborn. All other trains were

left where they finished service back in 2003 and nothing else has left the railway – consensus has it that they will remain there, abandoned and unwanted, ad infinitum.

## “FIRST TRAIN OUT”



*The “first train out platform ...” at Earls Court (eastbound District Line platforms 1 and 2) may no longer necessary be the first train to arrive at Gloucester Road since CBTC. It is now the first train to leave Earls Court towards Gloucester Road. Your writer noticed this when it came up for platform 2 (Upminster) but his train was about two minutes late into platform 1. The train in platform 2 departed first but was held outside for his train to run round. Pre-TBTC, it was the first train to have the starting signal selected, unless the Regulator had intervened.*

**Photo: Brian Hardy**

this is proving difficult to achieve in practice. The Bakerloo Line has a small single-ended depot on a cramped site. Consideration has been given to the possibility of freeing adjoining land for construction of a new depot, by stabling Network Rail trains elsewhere until the current depot can be vacated but, with no obvious alternative sites, negotiations will add to the project timescale.

A line blockade of more than two years provides the fastest, and therefore cheapest, line upgrade compared with a series of blockades over time. The current train fleet would be cleared from the depot to provide a vacant worksite, whilst the tunnel south from Queen’s Park would be available for uninterrupted conversion works. During this time, the London Overground service would continue to operate. With completion of depot works in 2031, the new fleet would be delivered to enable completion of line proving before the tunnel section reopens with around 20tph south of Queen’s Park. All works are to be completed before launch of a service through to Harrow & Wealdstone and 24tph in the central area. Stage 2 resignalling would be required to provide a full service of 27tph or 28tph in the central area. The size of the new fleet is not mentioned, but there is currently no extra berth capacity on the Bakerloo Line.

The Piccadilly Line Upgrade was split into two stages due to the tight financial situation, with fleet replacement in Stage 1 committed, whilst resignalling in Stage 2 remains unfunded. It seems the Bakerloo Line Upgrade has been split in the same way in the TfL Business Plan, but with a further Stage 3 not included, which could provide a Lewisham extension and future proofing for driverless trains as required in the Government funding agreement. The original New Tube for London (NTfL) plans of 2014 provided for driverless operation of the new trains except on the Bakerloo Line.

A recent Southwark Council press release states that permission to build the Lewisham extension through a Transport & Works Act Order could be sought in 2025 which suggests a possible 2037 opening

## BAKERLOO LINE UPGRADE

TfL recently used a consultant to assess the future viability of the current Bakerloo Line fleet, and was warned of a growing risk of failure, with increased costs, falling reliability and service quality, and possible sudden loss of the fleet.

Since the recent pandemic, demand for public transport in London has substantially recovered. Consequently, one of the six TfL priorities in support of the Mayor’s Transport Strategy is to ‘accelerate the growth and increase the capacity of the network’. This has led to a revival of the Bakerloo Line Upgrade project.

It was always envisaged that the small Bakerloo Line fleet could only be economically delivered in conjunction with new trains for another line, in order to spread development costs. For some time it has been linked with the Piccadilly Line fleet build.

When a business case could not be made for a Bakerloo Line fleet replacement, due to low demand, it was merged with the Lewisham extension project in the hope that the extension would make the case for a new fleet together with resignalling. Covid and resultant financial problems led to postponement of the extension project and the separation of the line upgrade programme again. If an extension of the Piccadilly Line train contract is to be placed for the Bakerloo Line, then an order must be made by 1 November 2026. New trains of modern design require depot reconstruction to service the new formations, along with modified power supply, signalling and tunnel ventilation. The Piccadilly Line has two expansive double-ended depots, which were both to be reconstructed by quarters without service disruption –

this is proving difficult to achieve in practice. The Bakerloo Line has a small single-ended depot on a cramped site. Consideration has been given to the possibility of freeing adjoining land for construction of a new depot, by stabling Network Rail trains elsewhere until the current depot can be vacated but, with no obvious alternative sites, negotiations will add to the project timescale.

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A recent Southwark Council press release states that permission to build the Lewisham extension through a Transport & Works Act Order could be sought in 2025 which suggests a possible 2037 opening

based on previous consultation. This would allow a continuation of the new train build, and line resignalling around that time, with DfT consideration being given to unstaffed train operation.

## PARSONS GREEN



**Above:** L18 top and tailing with L52 a train of four full hopper wagons in the western sidings at Parsons Green laying over all day on 30 June 2023, presumably awaiting a reballasting exercise during the coming nights.

**Left:** The lamp standard and roundel at the western end of the east-bound platform must surely take the prize for the wonkiest roundel on the underground – your photographer can't remember it ever being vertical. That, along with the almost permanent notice at most stations on the Wimbledon branch, that the eastbound platform indicators are highly unlikely to show the correct train destinations, does add some interest to the Wimbledon branch!

**Both photos: Nigel Horder**

## SOUTHGATE



In *Underground News* for April 2023, it was noted that the Underground roundels at Southgate were being replaced, with one of them (*Left and Above*) by 30 June 2023.

**Photos: Transport for London (Left) and Jack Pourgourides (Above)**

## TRAIN INJECTION RATES

The train injection rate is crucial to service build between the end of engineering hours and the start of the morning peak at 07.00. Work was recently completed at Neasden Depot in preparation for the Metropolitan Line service boost upon resignalling, and was previously done at Northumberland Park by making the connection to Seven Sisters bi-directional. Proposals for Northern Line Upgrade 2 with 30tph were restricted to a late peak commencement without expensive new track layouts at Edgware and High Barnet to avoid the double-shunt into service. I recently reviewed the train injection rate in all

current working timetables. Morden provides the most intense injection of trains into service. It puts into service 5 trains in a quarter hour on four occasions through the morning build up, 9 in half-hour periods from 05.00 to 06.45, even 10 from 05.30 to 06.00. Upminster Depot provides five trains in a quarter hour on three occasions within 05.30 to 06.30, with 10 in the half hour to 06.00, but no 9 trains per half hour. The Victoria Line has 5 trains enter service in the quarter hour to 06.15, whilst Neasden and Cockfosters inject high rates into service but split between both depot ends.

In reviewing trains entering service, I was surprised to note that Stonebridge Park depot provides only 9 trains for service, whilst the original London Road depot provides 11 and Queen's Park provides 7, with one train starting from Elephant & Castle platform. Also, whilst the Central Line has two major

depots, Hainault provides 32 trains whilst Ruislip only provides 17, with 12 trains from White City Sidings, 10 from Loughton Sidings, 5 from Woodford Sidings and one from Woodford bay platform.

**John Hawkins**

## CENTRAL LINE ENGINEERING WORK AT LEYTONSTONE

The Liverpool Street – Woodford/Newbury Park closures 29 April – 1 May and 13/14 May 2023 were principally due to track works at Leytonstone. The photo (*Below, Left*) shows battery locomotive L21 at west end of train 540 just on the eastbound line and battery loco L52 on the east end. The bus station on the Kirkdale Road side of Leytonstone station and the car park on the other side south of the station were both used as ballast stockpiles and consequently closed. The closure of the bus station at Leytonstone commenced at 08.00 on 24 April and ended at 17.00 on 17 May 2023. The ballast stockpile and grab in the Kirkdale Road bus station is seen (*Below, Right*) on 30th April 2023.

*Both photos: Andrew Colebourne*



## TOWER HILL



New describers have appeared at the bottom of the now entry-only stairs to the westbound island platform at Tower Hill (*Above, Left*). It is thought that these have replaced the 'first train out' indicators, which rarely worked and maybe not at all since CBTC was introduced. Similarly, the 'first westbound train' indicators at the west-end headwall have also been removed. The bracket and old tiling underneath may be seen.

*Photo: Colin Smith*

## 4LM PROGRESS

An update on the Four Lines Modernisation Programme reports that SMA8 (Finchley Road to Preston Road) is planned to go live in spring 2024, with the final section SMA14 (Rayners Lane to Uxbridge) to go live in spring 2025.

The successful commissioning of SMAs 6 and 7 in January and March 2023 will allow runtime improvements in early 2025 (sic), with a 5-

## PADDINGTON

10% improvement in average journey times between Stepney Green and Upminster.

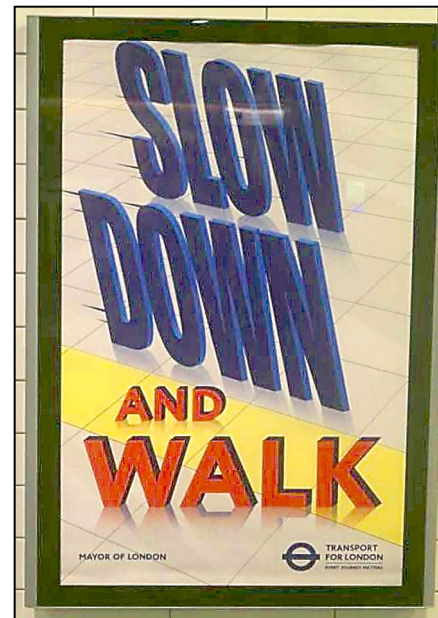
On the Metropolitan Line north of Finchley Road, equipment installation is reported to be as follows:

- SMA8: Finchley Road – Preston Road 100%
- SMA9: Preston Road – West Harrow/Moor Park 94%
- SMA13: North of Moor Park 80%
- SMA14: West Harrow – Uxbridge 59%.

On the sections of the District Line from Barons Court to Stamford Brook (SMA10) and Fulham Broadway to East Putney (SMA12) 63% of both are complete, with the aim to complete all installation by March 2024.

[Programmes and Investment Committee meeting on 19 July 2023]

It will be noted that SMA11 no longer is in the plan and the sections of SMA10 (west of Stamford Brook) and SMA12 (East Putney – Wimbledon) have both been dropped for the foreseeable future.



A new TfL poster seen at Paddington is self-explanatory.

**Photo: Stuart Hicks**

### OYSTER CARD AT 20

On 30 June 2023 the Oyster Card celebrated its 20th birthday, so this is a good opportunity to summarise its history and development. Limited “Touch & Pass” trials were carried out at St. James’s Park and Victoria Underground stations in 1990 and 1991 using Westinghouse Cubic smartcards. The first public experiment in contactless ticketing in London was a small trial of smart cards on Capital Citybus bus route 212 between Walthamstow and Chingford in 1992. This was followed on 3 February 1994, when a wider trial was carried out in Harrow, initially only covering season tickets and concessionary passes. The scheme was extended to PAYG in early 1995. Credit and tickets could be loaded at 19 Underground stations and 75 newsagents in the area. The scheme ended



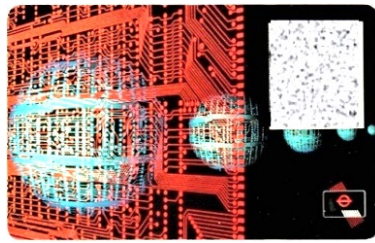
*The antennae for ATO have started to appear on the Uxbridge branch and certainly as far as Ruislip Manor. This is one off the end of Eastcote eastbound platform taken on 4 July 2023. The Eastcote owl is included in the photo to the left of the mirror and still watches over the equipment, although it looks like some pigeons have paid their respects to it ...*

**Photo: Alan Blake**

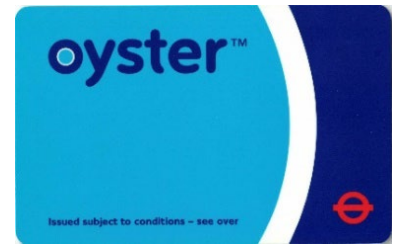
in December 1995 having been a great success with take up exceeding expectations by 66%. In 2002, the first oyster cards were issued, initially only to staff. Then from 30 June 2003 they became available to the public. At first they were only for travelcards but PAYG was added the following year. Daily capping was introduced on 27 February 2005. London Overground was launched on 11 November 2007 expanding oyster to include TfL Rail. Also in 2007, one pulse with Barclaycard allowed passengers contactless credit card combined with oyster on one card.



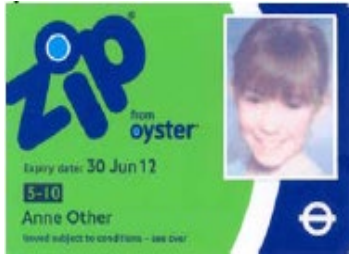
1992 Walthamstow



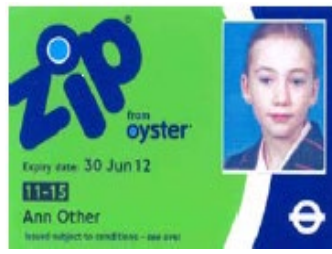
1994-95 Harrow



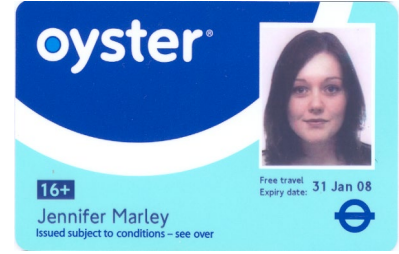
2003 oyster



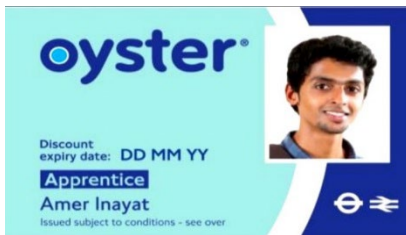
Child under 11



Child 11-15



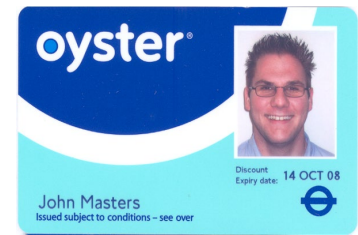
Student 16+



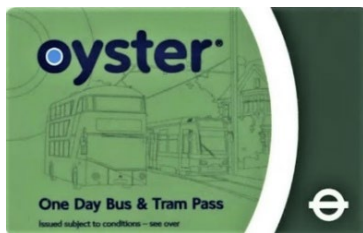
Apprentice oyster



Veteran oyster



Senior 60+



One day bus & tram pass



Visitor card - 1



Visitor card - 2



2007 oyster / visa



2011 Royal Wedding



2012 Queen's Golden Jubilee



2012



2013 Underground 150



2014 year of the bus



2019 Tutankhamun exhibition



2022 Elizabeth Line



2023 - Oyster at 20

Oyster availability was further extended to National Rail stations in the GLA area, plus stations to Grays from 2 January 2010, while 2012 saw the introduction of online oyster accounts on 18 May. The cable



car then opened and was added to its availability from 28 June. Finally, in 2012, contactless payments were introduced on London's buses. From 2 January fares revision in 2013, PAYG was extended on Greater Anglia stations to Broxbourne and Shenfield. Cash payments on London buses ceased from 6 July 2014 then two months later on 16 September, contactless payment with weekly capping came to Underground, TfL Rail and National Rail.

2015 saw availability extended to High Speed Rail between St. Pancras International and Stratford International from 31 July, Thames Clipper boats from 15 September and finally stations to Hertford East and Gatwick Airport were added to availability in 2016 on 11 January. The Hopper Fare, allowing a free change on buses and Tramlink, came in on 12 September. This Hopper fare was extended to unlimited changes within one hour on buses and trams from 31 January 2018. Availability of both PAYG oyster and contactless was extended to Heathrow stations on TfL Rail from 20 May and, finally for 2018, weekly capping for bus and tram passengers only on oyster was launched on 10 December. This weekly capping on oyster was extended to include Underground and rail on 2 September 2021 – it was already available to those paying contactless. The central section of the Elizabeth Line opened on 24 May 2022 and both oyster and contactless were available on it although only contactless, but not oyster, could be used between West Drayton and Reading, a situation which continues today. During 2023 PAYG is being extended to further stations on National Rail outside the Greater London area but only contactless will be accepted at these stations. Oyster Staff passes have a pale blue background, nominees passes green. Bus operator passes are purple, their nominees grey. Contractors have yellow and retired staff, red passes. Workers at the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics were issued with pink cards.

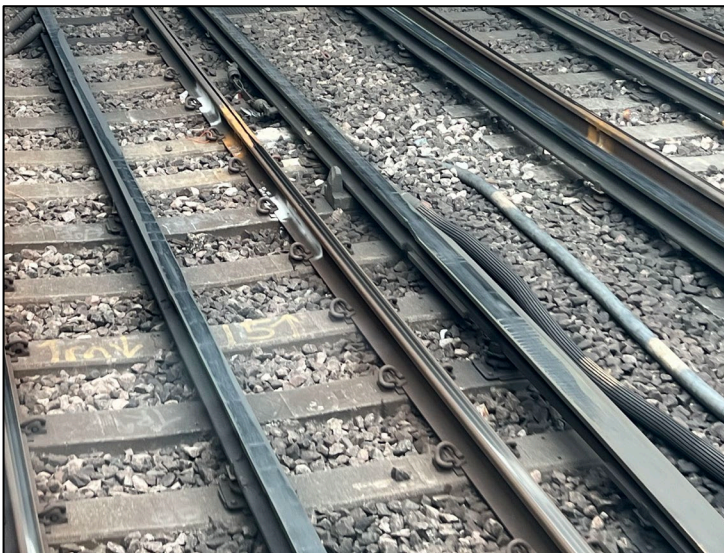
I am grateful to Thomas Canning from Oyster Support for the historical dates and oyster card illustrations in this article.

**John Crowhurst**

## TRACK WORK

Noted on 9 July 2023 at the east end of the District Line, was that insulated rail joints are being removed and the gaps are being welded, this view being at Upton Park.

*Photo: Dstock7080*



## PERFORMANCE

The 2022/23 performance year finished at 90.1 per cent of scheduled trips operated, just ahead of the 90.0 per cent target, and better than both of the previous two years. Train Operator availability and lack of available rolling stock remain the two biggest concerns affecting the network. The highest overall performing line was the Northern, with an overall core for the year of 96.8 per cent of scheduled trips operated. (*Customer service and operational performance report – Quarter 4 2022/23 – 11 December 2022 – 31 March 2023*).

## DEPOT CONTROL

The main depot control project at Northumberland Park has been deferred. This has mainly been driven by necessary re-prioritisation of engineering resources to support the introduction of new trains on the Piccadilly Line, which also requires control system works. The Northumberland Park Depot project will

re-start after the Piccadilly Line upgrade is delivered using lessons learned, and common technology and designs where possible. Remedial and small renewals will continue at Northumberland Park in the meantime. (*TfL Investment programme report – Quarter 4 2022/23 – to 31 March 2023*).

## ELIZABETH LINE PASSENGER USAGE INSIGHT

This is a summary of a paper to the Elizabeth Line committee meeting on 25 July 2023, when it was reported that passenger journeys continue to increase, with an average of 600,000 journeys made on the line each day. The week ending 17 June 2023 saw a record number of passenger journeys, with a total of 4.1 million, and Thursday 15 June 2023 seeing 685,000 passenger journeys, the highest overall daily number since opening.

It is noted that with the introduction of through running to the central area in 2022:

(a) Tottenham Court Road saw an increase from 110,000 to 175,000 passengers per day.

- (b) Bond Street saw an increase from 175,000 passengers to 230,000 per day.
- (c) Farringdon saw an increase from 100,000 passengers to 280,000 per day.

Paddington to Tottenham Court Road saw a 48% journey time reduction with the new line to an average of 11 minutes, and six times the number of daily journeys undertaken. The route from Shenfield has an earlier peak at 07.00 as well as the later morning peak at around 08.30, reflecting the high proportion of skilled manual and service-related commuting typical in that part of London. Saturday demand at 470,000 passengers per day is only 6% lower than the quietest working day of Monday.

Peak train occupancy remains at or below three passengers per square metre at the busiest times, between Whitechapel and Liverpool Street (east to west at the height of the morning peak), suggesting sufficient capacity for both comfortable travel and future growth. On the eastern section, occupancy approaches three passengers per square metre from Maryland to Stratford; and from Canary Wharf to Whitechapel (both at height of the morning peak). On the Shenfield route towards central London, passengers start to stand from Romford, and from Abbey Wood services depart with all seats taken and passengers from Woolwich and Custom House stand. Passengers will typically be standing from Slough on Reading/Maidenhead services at the height of the morning peak. Bus boardings on feeder services around Abbey Wood and Custom House stations more than doubled with the opening of the Elizabeth Line.

A graph of average mid-week passenger kilometres using the Elizabeth Line in September 2022 and January 2023 gives estimates:

- (a) 35% of Elizabeth Line demand came from the previously existing TfL Rail service (Shenfield to Liverpool Street, and Paddington to Heathrow/Reading).
- (b) 19% of Elizabeth Line demand transferred from London Underground. This is concentrated in particular locations. Demand on the Central Line at Ealing Broadway has reduced by around 40%, and on the Bakerloo Line, demand between Paddington and Oxford Circus has reduced by 5%. Overall, the biggest transfers are from the Central Line (37% of the Underground abstraction), Jubilee Line (24%), and Piccadilly Line (18%).
- (c) 4% of Elizabeth Line demand has come from the DLR, partly masked by demand growth from its own timetable enhancements.
- (d) 13% of Elizabeth Line demand transferred from National Rail services, mainly South Eastern and Great Western.
- (e) The remaining 30% of Elizabeth Line demand is 'new', with most of these trips generated (i.e. passengers would not have made these trips without the existence of the Elizabeth Line). This factor was only forecast at 2% pre-opening of the line.

## 'RUBBING SHOULDERS' AT BIDSTON



*Left: Merseyrail Class 508 EMU 508.136 at Bidston on the left and former LU D Stock, now 230.007 with Transport for Wales, on the right. It is quite conceivable that these two trains may have 'rubbed shoulders' at Wimbledon some 40+ years ago. With both trains being of similar vintage, the class 508 hasn't long to go before withdrawal but the repurposed D Stock lives on for some time to come.*

**Photo: Geoffrey Tribe**

## IMPROVED SERVICE INFORMATION

Improvements are being made to the electronic service update boards (ESUBs) and will be introduced from 14 July 2023. The



improvements will help passengers and staff see at a glance which stations have lift faults which affect step-free access.

Where there is more than one page of information affecting step-free lift access, the pages are numbered so passengers and staff can see that there is more detail to read.

**Photo: (Left)  
at Russell Square  
© Transport for London**

## KIROW CRANE TRIAL

On Saturday night/Sunday 8/9 July 2023, a successful trial was carried out with a TfL Kirow KRC250 crane between South Kensington and Gloucester Road. It ran under its own power from South Kensington towards Gloucester Road in the eastbound tunnel and the photo (Left) shows the wide tunnel that in years past had two tracks, for the Circle Line pre-July 1957 and (July 1957 to January 1966), for the eastbound fast and local District Line. The trial was prior to the weekend work on 22/23 July.

**Photo: (Left)  
© Transport for London**



## LTM 4-TC AT MID-HANTS DIESEL GALA



The LTM's 4-TC unit made a guest appearance at the mid-Hants diesel gala 14-16 July 2023, both photos being taken at Ropley in appalling weather.

**Both photos: Keith Ward**