

NEWSFLASHES

Items for the 'Newsflashes' (and Tailpieces) section of Underground News may be sent to the Editor by post and also by E-Mail, to the following address: editorUN@lurs.org.uk

NF 21/19 – A survey of the last remaining ticket offices on the Underground made on 7 February 2019, covering all stations from Harrow & Wealdstone to Queen's Park (except Willesden Junction, which is London Overground). All offices had closed (including Harrow and Wembley Central, which were expected to remain for a little longer), apart from Harlesden, which remained open. However, your reporter was told that Harlesden had been closed previously, but had to reopen after one of the ticket machines had been vandalised – it remains open until the machine is replaced.

NF 22/19 – For many years on Sundays, Camden Town station has been exit-only because of nearby Camden Market traffic. However, from Sunday 6 January 2019, the station was fully open on Sundays but with a one-way system operating (on both Saturdays and Sundays), with platform access being via the emergency spiral stairs and way out via both escalators.

NF 23/19 – The Investment Programme Report – Quarter 3, 2018/19 reveals that work on step-free access stations has been curtailed as part of economies in the 2018 Business Plan. A saving of £64m has been achieved by delaying Lot 3 stations and unannounced Lot 2 stations. TfL awarded a contract for seven stations on 7 December 2018, and design work has started for Burnt Oak, Debden, Hanger Lane, Ickenham, Northolt, Sudbury Hill and Wimbledon Park, scheduled to deliver step-free access by 2020. Additional step-free stations are not now to be delivered until the 'mid-2020s'.

NF 24/19 – It appears that the only District Line-served stations to retain the large 1980s dot matrix indicators are at Cannon Street (eastbound), St. James's Park, Sloane Square and Edgware Road. It will be recalled that the indicators at St. James's Park are not the originals, trial indicators appeared there before that design was agreed and subsequently implemented.

NF 25/19 – On Sunday 10 March 2019, it was noted that the temporary scaffold 'bridge' east of South Kensington was in the process of being dismantled, remedial work to the retaining walls having been completed.

NF 26/19 – The modernisation of Bank Underground station reached a significant milestone on 5 March 2019, with the first breakthrough between a new entrance on Cannon Street and the newly constructed Northern Line tunnel. The Bank Station Capacity Upgrade project, which is being delivered alongside supplier Dragados, will increase capacity at Bank station by 40 per cent by 2022. Bank and Monument stations are interlinked, with a complex array of tunnels underground and surrounded by a number of historically important buildings above ground, making upgrade work difficult and complicated. Engineering and construction teams have been working 24 hours a day at two separate sites since 2016 to excavate over 1,000m of tunnels and build a new station entrance. All the tunnels have been excavated using two diggers as the confined tunnel space prevented the use of a tunnel boring machine. In some instances, tunnelling has been undertaken by hand, using traditional mining techniques used on the Underground for over 100 years. The tunnelling has produced nearly 200,000 tonnes of material, which has been repurposed and transported to Dartford, where it is being used as part of a housing development. At the site of the new entrance, the project has excavated an area 30m deep in order to connect to the tunnels below. A new southbound tunnel has been constructed to convert the existing tunnel into a passenger concourse. The upgrade project will also deliver 12 new escalators, with a new link between the Central and Northern lines, as well as the DLR. Two new lifts will also be installed, providing step-free access to the Northern Line for the first time and improved step-free access to the DLR. Direct routes will be created between the Northern and Central lines, with two new moving walkways, helping to cut journey times.

NF 27/19 – TfL Board papers for Wednesday 27 March 2019:

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A 12 month trial of blue lights on the underside of the platform edges at Baker Street, Farringdon, Tower Hill, Monument and Victoria acts as a reminder to passengers about the gap between the train and the platform.

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A draft TfL Capital Strategy in the Board papers for 27 March 2019 includes new infrastructure schemes being developed for delivery over the next 20 years, including Crossrail 2; a combined upgrade of the Bakerloo Line (removed from Deep Tube Upgrade Programme) and extension to Lewisham, and potentially beyond; an extension of the Elizabeth Line to Ebbsfleet, and extensions of the DLR to Thamesmead, and trams to Sutton.

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Older members will recall the public-private partnership (PPP) contracts, which from 2003 provided maintenance of the LU system. After financial difficulties, Metronet contracts and employees were transferred to TfL under two new temporary companies, LUL Nominee BCV Ltd and LUL Nominee SSL Ltd, in 2008. They no longer have any employees. Remaining property, rights and liabilities are now to be transferred to London Underground Ltd (LUL), save for rights and obligations under the PPP with LUL, to leave both these nominee companies dormant. In 2010 Tube Lines Ltd was acquired by TfL, and similar transfers are now to take place, save under the Northern Line Train Services Contract with Alstom, simplifying company accounting. These changes will result in administrative savings of £1.2bn, already in the 2018/19 TfL Business plan.

NF 28/19 – London Overground are believed to be installing Train Protection Warning System (TPWS) on the Richmond branch this summer to improve their fleet interchangeability, especially with the expected addition of class 710 trains. The current standard trainstop system will become redundant with the commissioning of CBTC on the District Line, although funding has yet to be found for adaption of current tripcock-fitted Overground trains.

NF 29/19 – The southern end of the southbound Victoria Line platform at Oxford Circus, where the trackside wall is receiving attention (*Overleaf, Top*).



Photo: Stuart Hicks



NF 30/19 – Operated under the title of “Ye Old Black Friar”, class 73 electro diesels top and tailed the LT Museum’s heritage 4-TC unit around London on Saturday 30 March 2019. Starting (08.48) and ending (19.47) at Blackfriars (albeit 26 minutes late at 20.13), two of the highlights included Angerstein Wharf and Tattenham Corner. Both of these views (Above) are at South Croydon.

Both photos: John Mees

NF 31/19 – Unusual visitor to Ruislip Depot on 12 March (Left) was class 66 diesel 66.702 which had returned the S Stock seen in the distance at far right.

Photo: Trevor Wright