

FROM THE PAPERS

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26.08.20 – 08.09.20 RAIL #912 – The planned reconstruction of Camden Town station, in order to ease severe congestion and which has been on the cards for at least two decades, has been dropped from TfL’s budget because of its current financial difficulties.

26.08.20 – 08.09.20 RAIL #912 – The first Class 484 train for the Isle of Wight is taking shape at Vivarail’s Long Marston facility. Three of the five two-car trains on order will be delivered to the island before the end of this year. They will rack up testing miles, largely at night. But they won’t be carrying passengers before next spring – major infrastructure work is needed before that can happen, including raising all the platforms to ensure safe, level access for all. Vivarail’s Chairman and CEO Adrian Shooter said: “They are quite a bit bigger than the trains they will replace. Plenty of space! They are light and airy compared with the old ones. The aluminium shell is original and is as good as new. We found no corrosion at all. They will be good for another 30 years or more. We have retained the seating in the original Underground layout, as it is ideally suited for the island – both when the train is fully loaded with passengers and all their luggage and buggies, and for quieter times when everyone has a seat. Everything is new. It is basically a new train, and it meets all the latest standards of safety”. The Island line trains are being built alongside other being prepared for Transport for Wales. The Welsh trains will be diesel-battery hybrids, however the Island trains are conventional third-rail electric. Once the Welsh order is complete, Shooter says he will no longer touch diesel power. He explains: “If we were starting that project now, we would have argued for them as battery trains. Three years ago, we weren’t ready to do that. We are developing a family of battery trains. On a 3-car train, with a battery car at each end, you could put a pantograph on the car in the middle, so that it charges up the batteries when running under the wires. We reckon there are 70 routes in the UK, where such a train could perform. We may also build a hydrogen fuel cell version”. By replacing 80-year-old trains with similar second-hand trains that are a mere 40-years-old in origin, SWR has opted for the simplest, cheapest and arguably least ambitious version of the Vivarail train. Perhaps that’s not surprising as the route from Ryde is often described as the most heavily subsidised service per passenger mile in the country. Bigger and bolder ideas have come and gone (a light rail system and a tramway were both considered). For decades, the 1938-built former Underground trains have been something of a cultural symbol for the island – distinctive, quirky, tatty and worn out, with a ride quality often described as like a roller coaster because of the track is also worn out. The shiny new trains will rack up testing mileage this autumn, running largely at night. Island Line can only cope with two trains at a time, so daytime running will be very limited. The new trains will have WiFi and at-seat power. The driver also gets a more spacious cab. The bogies on the new trains are from the 2000s, not from when these trains were built, so they can take on much rougher track. The ride quality will improve a lot.

27.08.20 THE TIMES – The morning rush hour at Britain’s busiest railway station feels more like a slow Sunday. Even allowing for an August fall, the concourse at Waterloo is worryingly quiet. The sharp-elbowed briskly moving commuters from Woking and Dorking have been reduced to a handful of amblers. Coronavirus has sapped the energy from the capital. Ray Davies sang about millions of people swarming like flies round Waterloo Underground. Not this summer. The Waterloo & City Line, linking commuters to the financial centre, was shut at 08.00 on Tuesday, as it is on Sundays. Daily journeys on the Underground are less than a third of what they were in March, while bus travel has recovered to half its usual volume after falling to a few thousand journeys in May.

01.09.20 METRO – Sadiq Khan has reassured Londoners that TfL is making the capital’s transport network as clean and safe as possible. The Mayor spoke out after the CBI warned working from home could cost the economy almost £500B over the next four years. Mr. Khan said: “With schools returning this week and the gradual increase in workers going back to the office, TfL has taken all possible measures to make public transport as safe as possible”. He said TfL is “helping pave the way to recovery” with a “rigorous new cleaning regime, creating more space for walking and cycling, laying on extra school buses and making clear when services are less busy.”

02.09.20 METRO – A serial troublemaker set off fire alarms at Underground stations around London during a two-month campaign. Jeffrey Ewohime caused chaos on public transport and hours of delays for commuters. His “truly mindless behaviour” began at South Kensington station on 4 March and continued until May, when he was arrested by BT Police. He claimed any station evacuations as a result of his actions were “not his problem”. At St. Alban’s crown court, he admitted six counts of maliciously

activating a fire alarm to endanger the safety of the railway, and assaulting an emergency worker. He was handed a suspended 13-month prison sentence.

03.09.20 THE TIMES – As co-founder of the Twentieth Century Society, Clive Aslet felt obliged to choose relatively recent creations for his new book, *The Real Crown Jewels of England: 100 Places that Make Us Great*. He picked Coventry Cathedral, the Thames Barrier and the Victoria Line. “Nobody said it was beautiful,” he says of the last, “but it’s a miracle that trains run on it at 90 second intervals – something never intended when it was opened in 1968”. Nor that all the passengers would wear facemasks.

03.09.20 EVENING STANDARD – Boris Johnson faced growing calls to get on the Underground and show the world that London’s transport network is COVID-safe. Frustrated business leaders demanded to know why the Prime Minister and his Cabinet are not leading by example by being pictured using the Underground, buses and railways. Chancellor Rishi Sunak heeded the call, however, choosing to take the Underground to an event to launch his *Kickstart* policy to help young people into work. “If a picture paints a thousand words, the sight of Boris or Sadiq riding on an Underground train would send a message loud and clear that it is safe to use London’s public transport” said Simon Thomas, CEO of the Hippodrome Casino in Leicester Square. While no one is suggesting Mr. Johnson use the Underground every day, this newspaper reported yesterday how business groups London First and Heart of London Business Alliance, were pleading with the Prime Minister and the Mayor to personally lead the way in rebuilding public confidence in the capital’s public transport network. This is seen as a key step towards returning the city back to prosperity. Within hours, Mr Sunak tweeted a photograph of himself in a carriage reading his speech notes on his phone. Therese Coffey, the Works and Pensions Secretary, also responded by jumping on the Underground to the same event, and tweeted an image of herself hard at work on official papers during the journey. Last night, Sadiq Khan staged a photocall at London Bridge to announce a deal with Dettol for 900 hand sanitisers, before hopping onto an Underground train home. But Evening Standard photographers spotted two of the most senior Cabinet ministers in charge of getting Britain back to work, climbing into official chauffeur-driven cars; Transport Secretary Grant Shapps and Business Secretary Alok Sharma. It’s all very well talking about it, but people need to see them actually doing it. Then they will realise it is safe,” said Mr. Thomas. He added: “Once there’s an air of ‘do as I say, not as I do’”.

04.09.20 METRO – From Monday 25 September until the middle of October, there will be no step-free access to the northbound Metropolitan and Jubilee lines at Wembley Park station, owing to lift maintenance work. For the northbound Jubilee Line, use lift #3 and take the Jubilee Line southbound; change at Kilburn for the northbound service. (*Wouldn’t one stop to Neasden and back be preferable? – Ed.*). To exit the northbound Jubilee Line, continue to Kingsbury and then come back to Wembley Park on the southbound Jubilee Line. For northbound Metropolitan Line, use lift #3 and take the southbound Jubilee line; change at Kilburn (! – Ed.) for the northbound Jubilee Line, then change at Wembley Park for northbound Metropolitan line services. For step-free exit from the northbound Metropolitan Line, change at Wembley Park for northbound Jubilee Line; change at Kingsbury (*where there is step-free access for both platforms*) for southbound Jubilee line services back to Wembley Park. (*Again, wouldn’t one stop to Preston Road and cross the island platform be better than to go to Kingsbury? – Ed.*)

04.09.20 METRO – It was standing room only for some Underground travellers yesterday as LU reported the biggest surge of passenger numbers since lockdown. About 650,000 had tapped in on the Central and Jubilee lines by 10.00 – up 17% on the same day last week. But commuters are avoiding the rush-hour, with about 20% staggering their journeys, according to TfL. It came as No.10 prepares a back-to-work campaign with an advertising blitz on COVID-secure workplaces. TfL has refreshed safety advice on its website with figures showing numbers of travellers thinning by 08.15. It is also offering detailed passenger figures at 15-minute intervals so people can find a quiet time to travel. “Even before the pandemic, there was much more space available outside of these times” said a spokesman. Mayor Sadiq Khan has launched a campaign highlighting almost 1,000 hand-sanitisers on the Underground and bus networks.

04.09.20 EVENING STANDARD – Millions of people could get free rides into London under bold plans to fight the slump caused by coronavirus. Free tickets for trains, buses and the Underground are being discussed as a radical way of getting the public to see for themselves that it is safe to go back to offices and to enjoy shops, restaurants, museums and galleries. This paper has learned that talks are underway with the Government about a scheme dubbed “First Ride Free”, in which members of the public who have not gone into central London since the pandemic lockdown would get a credit to go in for the day. Supporters hope it could be as successful at getting people into the West End as Chancellor Rishi Sunak’s Eat Out to Help Out was at attracting the public back to restaurants. Nervousness about using

the transport system is believed to be one of the main factors stopping people going back to work or enjoying leisure time in central London. The scheme was drawn up by London's new transport commissioner Andy Byford and is being discussed with the Minister for London, Paul Scully. It will require government backing to go ahead because of the financial implications for TfL, but the Government would like busines to stump up a share of the costs. Mr Scully said: "I'm looking at all options to show people rather than just tell them that there is a warm and very safe welcome waiting for them when they come back to the centre of our great city". A TfL spokesman confirmed that it was "one of a number of options being considered to help encourage people back into central London in the coming months. More passengers are now returning to public transport and we are seeing steady growth every day. We are delivering a near full Underground, bus and rail service and the network is cleaner than ever before".

04.09.20 EVENING STANDARD – Cabinet ministers today answered this paper's call to show that London's public transport is safe by being seen on the Underground. Health Secretary Matt Hancock and Transport Secretary Grant Shapps led the way by issuing pictures of themselves in face masks and suits while heading to Westminster. Minister for London Paul Scully tweeted a snap riding home on a train last night, and former Tory vice-chairman for women Maria Caulfield tweeted a picture on the Underground. They stepped up to the plate after the Standard appealed for politicians to give a lead to nervous passengers by going public with their daily trips around the capital. Pictures also emerged of Mayor Sadiq Khan travelling by Underground. Chancellor Rishi Sunak and Work and Pensions Secretary Therese Coffey were first to respond to the call, using the Underground to attend a launch. This morning Mr. Hancock issued a photo of himself walking through the Underground station at Victoria to jump on the District Line. Mr. Shapps, a regular train passenger from his Hertfordshire constituency, tweeted a picture of himself standing on the Jubilee Line. He said: "A smooth three-train journey with a very high face covering compliance all round. Only one person in my carriage not wearing one. No idea if exempt or not as they were the opposite end. Best advice I can give is to challenge respectfully or stay two metres away from them but the network overall is fine". Mr. Scully, a daily user of the Underground and the railway, tweeted: "No problem socially distancing on my SWR train. Back home in good time to finish off the last of my work tonight". A reader took a snap of the Mayor reading the Standard while riding home on the Underground yesterday.

08.09.20 THE TIMES – Congestion is rising in Britain's biggest cities as commuters slowly return to the workplace, figures suggest. Data analysis showed that traffic had increased during the morning rush-hour yesterday when compared with early last week. In some cities, traffic was back at levels seen last year. The Underground reported that 700,000 passengers used the network by 10.00 yesterday. This was a rise of 15% on last Tuesday, the first working day after the August bank holiday.

09.09.20 – 22.09.20 RAIL #913 – The Tramlink extension from Wimbledon to Sutton is another project that has been placed on the back burner by TfL until its cash flow improves.

09.09.20 – 22.09.20 RAIL #913 – Although it was widely reported that the 25/26 June lineside fire occurred at Manor Park, this is the general term for this part of the London Borough of Newham. The incident in fact took place alongside the Underground tracks just east of East Ham station, affecting District and Hammersmith & City Line services.

10.09.20 METRO – As one of London's largest landowners, TfL is supporting hundreds of businesses across the capital, many of which are located under railway arches. More than 86% of these are Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), and they have played a vital part in helping their local communities during the pandemic. Since the beginning of lockdown in March, TfL has offered its tenants financial support, including more time to pay their rent. All SMEs received 100% rent relief between March and June, and since then rents have been reduced by 50%. To help smaller tenants retain cash flow, TfL now introduced monthly payments in arrears, instead of quarterly in advance. Situated in Haggerston, boutique distillery *58Gin* won TfL's Love Your Local Arches awards in Sustainability and Community categories. It had to close its doors in March, but became the first UK distillery to switch production to hand sanitisers in response to the pandemic. Called *Hand "Gin"tiser*, it is recommended by the WHO and *58Gin* became official suppliers to the Met. Police, NHS trust hospitals and Marie Curie hospices. Meanwhile, Berber & Q, a Mediterranean grill house also located in Haggerston, won a community award for serving local NHS workers during lockdown. It delivered a total of 17,000 meals to hospitals and mental health units in its neighbourhood.

15.09.20 EVENING STANDARD – Two-thirds of Londoners are comfortable about using mainline trains and the Overground, a poll revealed today. The YouGov survey is the latest to suggest that confidence is growing among commuters who rely on public transport to get back to the office. 21% of respondents said they would be "very comfortable" and 46% "fairly comfortable" using all forms of above ground trains, with only 9% "very uncomfortable". Black cabs were similarly reassuring, with 62% "comfortable"

and 8% “uncomfortable”. 53% expressed confidence in the Underground, though 19% were very “uncomfortable” at the thought of using the Underground. Only 48% say they would be “comfortable” going on London buses, with 40% “fairly or very uncomfortable”. Masks have been compulsory on public transport since June; deep-cleaning of the Underground was introduced in July. Passenger numbers are increasing weekly. It came as the Government launched a campaign to encourage people to return to their offices after months of working from home. Ministers want people to go back into their workplace if they can do so in safety.

20.09.20 SUNDAY TELEGRAPH – Underground stations could be renamed under plans put forward by the Conservative London mayoral candidate for a £100 million a year sponsorship deal to bolster investment in the capital’s public transport network. Companies would be given the chance to bid to rename stations as part of a new advertising campaign inspired by the Dubai Metro. The plans could see, for example, Knightsbridge station renamed after Harrods, while Oxford Circus could be sponsored by brands with flagship stores nearby, such as Nike. It is believed that the initiative would raise up to half a billion pounds over five years for Transport for London which, has been suggested, has been left with “record levels of debt”. It comes a week after TfL revealed its advertising revenues had plummeted by 90 per cent in the first quarter of the financial year, with bosses warning that the coronavirus pandemic has caused a “catastrophic impact” on the business. *(In Dubai, the branding of 21 new stations across the network has raised more than £300 million, with 10-year sponsorship deals now in place with firms including Emirates, First Gulf Bank and Dubai Healthcare City. The Spanish capital Madrid has also begun adopting sponsorship in recent years, with Samsung striking a three month deal to rename the Puerta del Sol station, and Vodafone sponsoring an entire Underground line over three years. In New York, station sponsorship has been used since 1977, with naming rights sold across the Metro system).* It is thought that the size of the London Underground network would mean that TfL could generate substantially higher revenues than other Metro systems. TfL has previously raised funds through similar initiatives, such as the renaming of Surrey Docks station in 1989 after the Surrey Quays shopping centre. A number of companies have also sponsored the cycle-hire scheme, the Docklands cable car, and the London Underground map, while Google is sponsoring Oyster and contactless card-readers on buses and in stations.

22.09.20 EVENING STANDARD – Londoners should wear a mask outside their home if social distancing is not guaranteed, Sadiq Khan urged today amid calls for tougher action to enforce the rules on the Underground. The Mayor was speaking to Boris Johnson this morning about the London Plan against a second wave of COVID-19 which includes a major expansion of the wearing of face coverings in the capital, as happens in cities on the Continent. Mr. Khan wants more “routine mask wearing” when social distancing cannot be guaranteed. It is understood that this could include such scenarios such as walking around a packed Leicester Square, a crowded market, or when leaving a table to go to toilets in a pub or restaurant. There were also calls today for more steps to ensure masks are worn on public transport. Former transport minister Stephen Hammond said: “Platform Staff should be reminding people and warning people that they need to wear a mask”. On travellers not doing so, he added: “They are being irresponsible for their own safety and reckless and selfish in their wider responsibility to keep others safe”. TfL enforcement officers have spoken to 95,280 people about wearing face masks, with 6,913 stopped from boarding and 1,674 removed from services. They have issued 362 £100 fines (£50 if paid within 14 days which can escalate to £3,200 for subsequent offences). TfL said staff were “actively” engaging to make sure passengers are aware it is a requirement to wear face coverings on public transport, unless they are exempt. TfL spokesman said: “We’re seeing more than 90% compliance at the busiest times of the day. However, we are taking firm action against the selfish minority who are not thinking about their fellow passengers by refusing to wear a face covering. It’s inconsiderate, unacceptable and illegal”. London TravelWatch said: “Our survey shows that satisfaction with the number of people wearing face masks on the Underground has been decreasing and we are aware that TfL, in conjunction with the BT Police are planning to focus their enforcement effort on particular hotspots and times of day where face mask compliance is low”.