

# REPORT OF SOCIETY MEETING

## TfL's RAIL ACTIVITIES IN 2019

by Kim Rennie

A report of the LURS meeting at All Souls Clubhouse  
on Tuesday 11 February 2020

As has become customary, Kim began the presentation starting in January 2019 and progressed through the year with subjects featured in chronological order.

Waltham Forest had been designated the first "London Borough of Culture" – a new civic arts and performance festival – and dedicated platform roundels, affixed over certain standard name signs, marked this at TfL stations within the borough. These included Highams Park, Leyton and Leytonstone.



The relative lack of overall significant events on LU during the year meant that speaker had drawn on a greater number of non-LU rail subjects than he would have liked, for which he apologised, but such is life. Among these were the new Class 717 units introduced by Great Northern from January, and whose link with LU is their use on the former Northern City Line between Drayton Park and Moorgate. Both external and internal views were shown. Associated with this was the gradual replacement of the existing Class 313 units, which were also depicted, some in truly appalling external condition and with a mixture of liveries from former operators.

Also beginning in January was the short-term use of LO Class 378/2 units on the Gospel Oak – Barking Line due to delays in commissioning the new Class 710/2 trains. These 378s were reformed from 5-cars to 4-cars in order to fit the existing operational length of platforms. Finsbury Park gained new lifts to all areas the same month.

The Jubilee Line 1996 Tube Stock started to receive new designs of priority seat moquette from March, which used six different messages on a blue circle to draw attention to their function. There had been three earlier patterns used to differentiate priority seating and these were also illustrated.

Saturday 16 March saw the first section (SMA 0.5) of CBTC signalling commissioned from Latimer Road to Hammersmith (C&H). Various aspects of new and old signal equipment (the latter usually covered over) illustrated the new era. The same day, the remaining Class 172/0 DMUs on the 'Goblin' were withdrawn after coming off lease and a number of earlier photos reminded the audience of their appearance both inside and out. The third notable event to occur on this date was the opening of a rebuilt entrance to the westbound platform at South Woodford, which had been given a ramp to provide step-free access to the platform.

The LT Museum's 1938 Tube Stock was used for a tour on 17 March and photographed passing West Ham westbound on the District Line. New signage at Moorgate produced an erroneous "Watton-at-Sea"

station on Great Northern. Later corrected to Watton-on-Stone, both 'before' and 'after' views were seen.

On 23 April, the refurbished D Stock cars, now reclassified as Class 230 under the Vivarail D-Train project, entered service on the Marston Vale Line for West Midlands Trains. Kim visited later in the year and a comprehensive series of photos showed various aspects of them, including the different seating layouts, accessible toilet provision and other exterior/interior modifications.

The first new "Tube map" of 2019 appeared in May. The principal changes were explained using slides showing the revised and previous layouts (all of which have been documented in previous *Underground News* reports) and mainly concerned additional step-free access and new 'walking routes' between adjacent stations. The LO Class 710/2s were finally introduced on the 'Goblin' from 23 May, and Kim caught up with some of these at Wanstead Park, Leytonstone High Road and Haringay Green Lanes stations.

Crossrail preparation work saw reconstruction continue apace on TfL Rail. Work was most advanced on the eastern section out of Liverpool Street, with new lifts and footbridges being brought into use. Progress on the western section from Paddington was considerably less advanced. Delivery of Class 345s for the Elizabeth Line led to a reduction of TfL Rail Class 315s – views of these included a 315 'scrap move' at Stratford. The Waterloo 'Shell' entrance reopened on 25 May and again, 'before' and 'after' photos were employed to contrast the changes.



The 150th anniversary of the District Line was celebrated during the year, though by no means to the extent that the Metropolitan had enjoyed in 2013. On the weekend of 22/23 June, steam train runs operated between High Street Kensington and Ealing Broadway using Met. No.1, 'Sarah Siddons' and the Bluebell Railway's Metropolitan Stock.

'Night Tube' had been causing problems at Euston for some time as the main entrance and exit to LU was via the main line concourse, which Network Rail now closes overnight. Modifications were thus made during the year to allow passengers using this route to gain entry and exit directly by the 'piazza' or forecourt.

The annual Pride London event led to various temporary changes. The DLR gained rainbow-themed signs at Canary Wharf and Poplar, and many DLR trains carried rainbow roundels on their centre 'cab' doors. LU and LO received a number of LGBT+-themed platform roundels from June, including at Bounds Green, Haggerston, Hammersmith (D&P), Romford, Southwark and Vauxhall.





A number of LO Class 315s became due for heavy overhaul in 2019. Rather than spend money on this, they were replaced by TfL Rail 315s made surplus by Class 345s. A scene at Hackney Downs showed a unit with blue doors yet serving a station with orange roundel platform signs. On a photo of two units coupled together, the two types of blue skirt livery on adjacent cars were clearly discernible – plain blue for TfL Rail and blue with orange lining for LO. A further slide depicted a newly applied orange & blue LO roundel sitting above a plain blue TfL Rail skirt.

A new West Hampstead (LO) station was opened on 29 July and sits to the west of the old building. Lifts to both platforms have obviously been provided but of course no new ticket office. White Hart Lane received similar treatment with new facilities opening on 26 August, though with much greater access arrangements designed to serve the new THFC stadium nearby.



One of the few LU rolling stock events of 2019 was an all-over advertising 'wrap' for a 1992 Tube Stock unit on the Waterloo & City Line. Logoed for a company called "Freshworks", it presumably promotes a city recruitment agency, but as this is not obvious it does question just how successful the advert is.

On the last day of August, the next section of CBTC signalling was brought into public use. Areas SMA 1 & 2 now extended the automatic working from Latimer Road to Euston Square, and also to Paddington (Circle)

and Finchley Road. This was less easy to illustrate, as much of the new infrastructure is in tunnel areas, but some conventional signals at Baker Street and Edgware Road (C&H) were recorded prior to their decommissioning.



September 7 & 8 had Heritage Train trips operated at the north end of the Metropolitan Line and one of the pre-event test trips was depicted approaching Preston Road southbound with 'Sarah' at the front of the LU 4-TC set. In the same month the 4-car Class 378/2 sets were displaced onto the Watford DC Line, where they operated an improved frequency timetable alongside new Class 710/2s. An exhibition at Olympia used a withdrawn 1967 Tube Stock car as a display area. Careful detective work later identified this as the former 4179. Some time ago, the old Eurostar platforms at Waterloo were brought back into use for domestic rail services. A new entrance has now opened linking the lower concourse (where the Eurostar ticket office once was) with the LU station.

An ongoing programme is the installation of TfL-standard signage on what are to become stations on the Elizabeth Line. New permanent platform roundels with purple rings were noted as fitted at Chadwell Heath, Forest Gate, Gidea Park, Goodmayes, Manor Park and Seven Kings. Illuminated "silhouette" roundels began to appear on the exterior of stations, though it seems with covers either blank or lettered "TFL•RAIL" placed over a presumed "ELIZABETH LINE" name. Signs bearing the latter name were also fitted on Central Line platforms 4 & 5 at Liverpool Street.

A Class 313 farewell tour was operated by UK Railtours on 23 October. Starting at King's Cross, the tour visited Welwyn Garden City, Royston, Hertford North and Moorgate before ending back at the 'Cross. Using two 3-car units, the south end DTSO of unit 313 064 was specially returned to Network SouthEast livery, though without BR double arrows apparently due to DoT copyright reasons.

The annual Royal British Legion appeal caused the usual poppy platform roundel name signs to appear across parts of TfL. No less than 25 different locations were used, all of which Kim was able to record during several lengthy photographic sorties. Some of the vinyl covers were incorrectly sized and did not sit over the permanent metal signs neatly or correctly. Poppies also appeared rolling stock and a representative selection of LU, LO, TfL Rail and London Trams examples were featured.



Another form of special roundel were the mosaic versions installed at Chingford, Highams Park and South Tottenham (at least) by a local artist. Further variations on TfL's "sacred" roundel were fitted at Westminster in November and consisted of designs using the pan-African colours of black, red, green and gold. These were for long-term display under the Art on the Underground scheme. A rather shorter event were various hand-coloured roundels at Green Park, King's Cross St. Pancras, London Bridge and Victoria which appeared on 17 December only as part of "World Children's Day". TfL Rail was extended from Hayes & Harlington to Reading from the 17 December National Rail timetable

change. This has had little effect on stations, however, as many remain under GWR or Network Rail management. Finsbury Park had a modernised entrance open on the Wells Terrace side on the same date as part of a greater redevelopment of the area

The second, and final, "Tube map" of 2019 was issued in December. The main reason for change was the extension of TfL Rail to Reading, and which is now squeezed in using a vertical line on the extreme edge of the diagram. The 'walking route' concept was extended to include links between certain riverboat piers and LU and DLR stations.

Rail Adhesion Trains are a regular seasonal activity and were illustrated by the 1962 Tube Stock 5-car RAT in operation at Woodford and at Theydon Bois.



Finally, and in a light-hearted mode, Kim joked that the most important event of the year was his retirement from LU through voluntary severance. A “golden handshake” photo of his last day in the London Underground Control Centre was shown, then contrasted with one of him driving an R Stock when as a Guard on the District Line in 1978.

The meeting concluded with a vote of thanks to Kim for another comprehensive review of the previous year.

***All photos in review:  
Kim Rennie***