

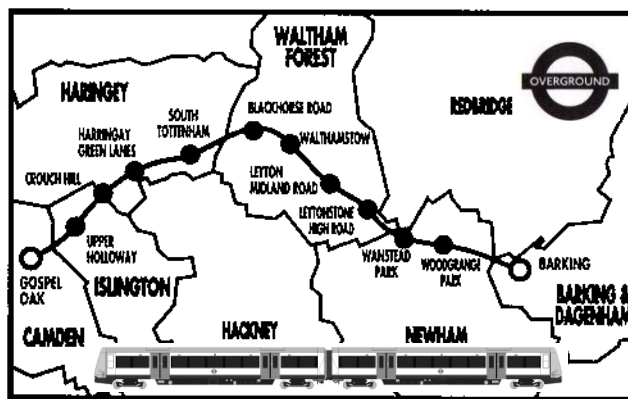
BARKING – GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP

FOUNDED 1964

Chairman: Alderman Frederick Jones,
Barking & Dagenham Council

Secretary: Glenn Wallis
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NEWS RELEASE

Originally issued 15th December, now *revised* 17th December 2015

DECEMBER 2015 NEWS ROUND-UP

Here briefly are some important recent & forthcoming events.

- **After 2-year wait new handrails fitted to trains**
- **Promoting Walthamstow Town Centre**
- **New timetable started 13th December**
- ***Saturday's steam special confirmed***
- ***Christmas & New Year train services***

ADDITIONAL HANDRAILS & STRAPS FITTED TO BARKING – GOSPEL OAK TRAIN FLEET

BGORUG^[1] first approached train operator LOROL^[2] about removing 12 seats and fitting extra handrails to allow more passengers to stand in comfort in 2013. Originally rebuffed, BGORUG continued to press for measures to adapt the trains, grossly overcrowded in peak times, to accommodate more passengers. By 2014 it was established that removing seats to allow more standees would push the trains over their maximum permitted gross laden weight. Earlier this year, Transport for London (TfL) agreed to fit extra handrails and hanging straps to the eight 2-car diesel trains and this work has now been completed.





DECEMBER 2015 NEWS ROUND-UP NOW *REVISED*

Said BGORUG Secretary, Glenn Wallis, “At long last, 5 years after they were delivered^[3], these trains now actually look like inner suburban trains, instead of cross-country ones, which is what they were designed to be.”

“Passengers will have to continue struggling to board these packed trains for at least another 18 months and quite possibly 2¼ years before 4-car electric trains take over. These extra handrails and straps will encourage standing passengers to move away from the door vestibules with the confidence that there will be something for them to hang onto further along the carriage, thus allowing more passengers to board.”

PROMOTING WALTHAMSTOW TOWN CENTRE

Since the pedestrian link between Walthamstow Central and Walthamstow Queen’s Road stations opened just over a year ago, BGORUG has been amazed by both the numbers of people making use of the link and the growing numbers using Walthamstow Queen’s Road station.

“Before TfL put it on the Tube map in 2007, Walthamstow Queens’s Road was always a sleepy little station,” said Glenn Wallis, BGORUG Secretary. “Passenger numbers grew but were still nothing compared to those using the station since the link opened.”

BGORUG had campaigned for the link since 1990 and so it was named after its chief protagonist, Group member Ray Dudley, who sadly did not live long enough to see it open.

“The trouble was no one knew where Walthamstow Queen’s Road station was,” said Glenn Wallis. “It is not even very near Queen’s Road! Since May this year it has been shown as an *Out of Station Interchange* with Walthamstow Central on the London Overground map^[4] which should give some idea as to its location.”

“However, there was no such indication to passengers on trains, to show just how close to the town centre and the famous High Street, the station was.”

Group members noticed that a number of Overground stations have *strap-lines* added to the platform *roundel* station name boards advising of a popular destination reached by alighting at that station.

Glenn Wallis continued, “Last April we asked TfL to put strap-lines on the platform *roundels* and were very pleased to see them appear last month. It is hoped that the *strap-lines* will encourage those who have never alighted at the station before to do so and explore the High Street, the new Empire cinema and the recently opened pop-up pub in the old Granada cinema.”



Seen in early 1968, the station was renamed Walthamstow Queen’s Road on 6th June that year. The chimneys & cooling towers of Walthamstow Power Station can be seen behind the station. [Photo: J. E. Connor]



Deputy Leader of Waltham Forest Council, Cllr. Clyde Loakes officially opens the footpath linking the two stations on 26th September 2014. [Photo LBWF]



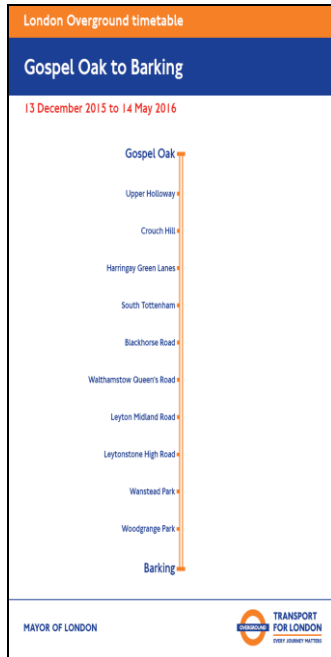
The new strap-lines appeared at the station in November.





DECEMBER 2015 NEWS ROUND-UP NOW *REVISED*

NEW TIMETABLE STARTED SUNDAY 13TH NOVEMBER



The National Winter timetable commenced on Sunday 13th December. There is only one change to the Barking – Gospel Oak service and that affects the Monday – Friday evening *PIXC-buster* service. Previously, this service departed Gospel Oak at 17:37, three minutes after the booked arrival of the 17:00 from Clapham Junction at 17:34. Starting on Monday 14th December, the *PIXC-buster* now departs Gospel Oak at 17:35, allowing just a minute for Barking bound passengers to transfer from the Clapham Junction train, providing it is on time, which is not often the case.

BGORUG Secretary, Glenn Wallis, said, "I honestly do not know why London Overground have re-timed the *PIXC-buster* service. I can only think that it is to prevent delay to the 17:03 from Barking which is booked to arrive at Gospel Oak at 17:40 and often has to wait to get into the platform."

"The trouble is that by now departing at 17:35, the *PIXC-buster* will leave most, if not all, the passengers off the Clapham Junction train behind, thereby causing increased overcrowding on the next Barking train departing at 17:50. Drivers are expected to run to time and are not allowed to wait for passengers."

BGORUG would like to hear from passengers who change at Gospel Oak and now miss the 17:35 Barking service and those who find the following 17:50 more overcrowded than it was during the previous timetable.

REPLACEMENT STEAM LOCOMOTIVE FOUND FOR SATURDAY'S CATHEDRALS EXPRESS

Steam Dreams^[5], a Guildford based promoter of mainly steam hauled railtours under the *Cathedrals Express* banner, has operated steam hauled trains on both rail routes from Southend for several years now. Many of these are routed over the Barking – Gospel Oak line including the Christmas specials.

This Saturday's Christmas train from Southend East (09:09) to Winchester for the Christmas market, picking up at Upminster (09:39-09:41) and West Hampstead (10:40-10:42), is almost fully booked. However, steam loco 61306 *Mayflower* which had been rostered for the train, failed and was unable to haul last Saturday's (12 Dec) *Cathedrals Express* from Ashford to Salisbury or Wednesday's (16 Dec) King's Cross – York *Cathedrals Express* and a vintage diesel locomotive was provided instead.

Steam Dreams have a pool of steam locomotives to draw on and so it was able to secure Ian Riley's LMS *Black 5* 4-6-0, 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*, the loco being declared "fit to run" yesterday. 45407 is no stranger to the Barking – Gospel Oak Line, hauling the previous two Christmas *Cathedrals Express*'s from Southend on 14th December 2013 and 6th December 2014. However, on those two occasions she was double heading the train, coupled 'inside' classmate 44871. This will be the first time she has hauled a train over the Barking – Gospel Oak line unassisted. **Timings follow overleaf.**



Mayflower's last visit to our line was on 7th March, seen here in better health at Blackhorse Road. [Photo: Richard Long]

Ian Riley's *Black 5*s have often double headed over the Barking – Gospel Oak Line, but Saturday will be the first time 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*, coupled 'inside' in these photos, has been unassisted. [left: At Wanstead Pk. by J. Harvey; centre: at Walthamstow, & right at South Tottenham both by G. Wallis]





DECEMBER 2015 NEWS ROUND-UP NOW *REVISED*

The Cathedrals Express, Saturday 19th December 2015 Southend East - Winchester
Motive Power: Class 5 No. 45407 *The Lancashire Fusilier*

OUTWARD TRAIN REPORTING No.: IZ21			
Location	Arrive	Dep/Pass	Platform
Southend East		09:09	I
Upminster	09:39	09:41	I
Barking Upney Junction		09:51	Up Tilbury
Barking		09:53	8
Barking Station Junction		09:55	Up T&H
Woodgrange Park		09:57	I
Leyton Midland Road		10:05½	I
South Tottenham		10:15	I
Harringay Park Junction		10:20	
Upper Holloway		10:24	I
Junction Road Junction		10:26	Up T&H
Highgate Road High Level Signal NL 1306	10:29	10:32	
Gospel Oak		10:34	Down NLL
West Hampstead	10:40	10:42	I
Kensal Green Junction		10:48	Down NLL
Willesden High Level Junction		10:51	Down NLL

Return working: 45407 will be detached at Hanwell Bridge Loop (18:53-19:27) & train then worked forward to Southend by a West Coast Railways vintage diesel locomotive.

CHRISTMAS & NEW YEAR TRAIN SERVICES



"Christmas at 30 St Mary Axe"
Our 2014 Christmas card was designed by 8 year old Molly Roberts, daughter of New Cross Gate Drive, Karl Roberts.
In her surreal theme, the 'Gherkin' becomes a tree, basaltic are destinations and LOROL trains become the forest that works around them!
Illustrated by David Charlesworth Ltd.
Produced especially for LOROL and supporting The Railway Children.

CHRISTMAS EVE Thursday 24th December

A normal Thursday timetable will operate until the last trains at: 21:33 from Barking; 21:35 from Gospel Oak.

CHRISTMAS DAY & BOXING DAY

Friday & Saturday 25 – 26 December

No Service throughout London Overground.

Sunday & Monday, 27 – 28 December

Engineering work requires the line between Barking and Gospel Oak to remain closed and rail replacement buses will run every 15 minutes instead. **Replacement Bus Route 'J'** will run between Gospel Oak and South Tottenham and **Replacement Bus Route 'T'** will operate between Barking and South Tottenham. Rail Replacement Bus timetables will be posted at stations and on our website in due course.

Tuesday & Wednesday, 29 – 30 December

Trains will run to a Saturday timetable.

NEW YEAR'S EVE Thursday, 31st December

A Saturday will timetable will be operated, fares will not be applicable after 23:45 hours.

NEW YEAR'S DAY Friday, 1st January

The first trains will be at 08:48 from Barking and 08:50 from Gospel Oak. Trains will then operate to a Saturday timetable.

Saturday 2nd January

Trains will resume operating to the normal timetable.





- ENDS -

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
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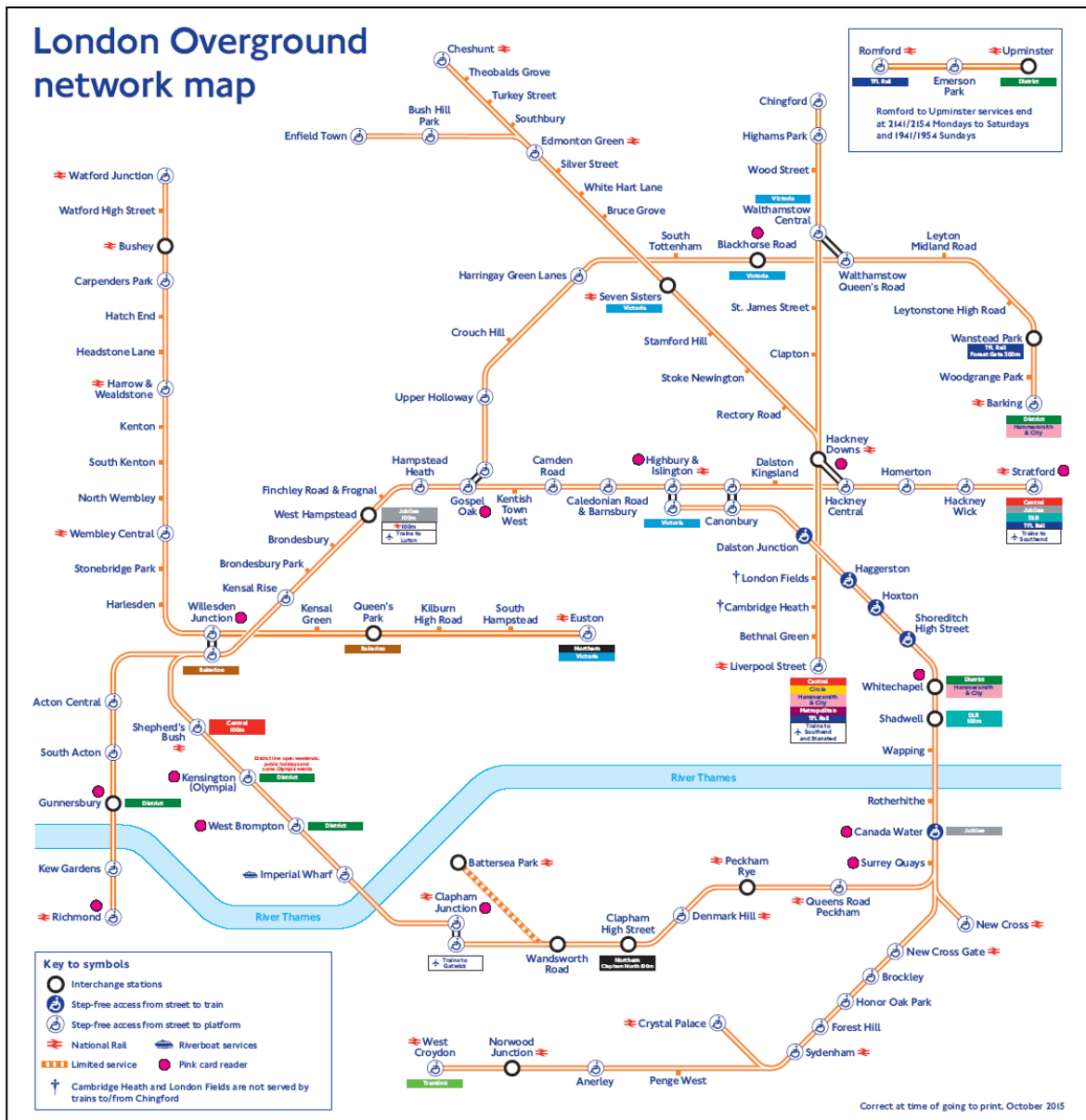
NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. Formed in 1964 as the Barking – Kentish Town Line Committee to fight Dr. Beeching’s proposed closure of the line, the Barking – Gospel Oak Rail User Group has continued to represent the line’s passengers and campaign for improved services and station facilities, and also for the electrification of the only non-electrified passenger railway in North East London, now finally approved by the Government on 26 June 2013. It is hoped that electric passenger trains will have commenced operation by mid 2018.
2. Following the transfer of responsibility for the former Silverlink Metro services from the Department for Transport (DfT) in 2006, Transport for London (TfL), let the London Rail Concession to London Overground Rail Operations Ltd (LOROL), a joint Hong Kong/German owned venture, to operate the London Overground network from November 2007 until March 2014, subsequently extended to November 2016 by TfL. TfL has shortlisted four bidders for the new London Rail Concession to start in November 2016:
 - Arriva Rail London Ltd (Deutsche Bahn)
 - LoKeGo Ltd [Keolis (UK) Ltd (51%) & Go-Ahead Holding Ltd (49%) joint venture]
 - Metroline Rail Ltd (owned by Singapore based transport group ComfortDelGro)
 - MTR Corp (Hong Kong Mass Transit)
3. As part of the London Rail Concession contract let by TfL, LOROL undertook to order, in conjunction with rail leasing company Angel Trains, 8x2-car Class 172 *Turbostar* diesel multiple units from the former British Rail Engineering plant at Derby, now owned by Bombardier Transportation. Delivery of these trains took place in mid 2010.





4.



5. See www.steamdreams.com or click on the *Cathedrals Express* icon on our website links page.

