BARKING - GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP



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www.barking-gospeloak.org.uk info@barking-gospeloak.org.uk @RidingtheGoblin >



BARKING - GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP BULLETIN 27TH FEBRUARY 2016

APOLOGY

Work on the Winter 2015/16 newsletter started early in the New Year but has been delayed by the failure of my computer and a bout of ill health. I now have access to the files on my failed computer, now replaced, but other pressing BGORUG business has further delayed progress. I hope that the newsletter will appear before the winter ends. As well as number of news items, it will sadly contain appreciations of two long serving members who recently passed away, Bill Measure and our Chair, Hon. Alderman Fred C. Jones MBE. In view of the latter's death, the Executive Committee has agreed that Graham Larkbey should act as Chair until the AGM in April.

ARRANGEMENTS DURING 8-MONTH CLOSURE FOR ELECTRIFICATION

The reason for this interim Bulletin is that in recent days BGORUG has received reliable information from several sources regarding arrangements Transport for London (TfL) is making for passengers while the line is closed for Network Rail to carry out the bulk of the electrification works.

The line will be closed continuously between Barking and South Tottenham on 4th June 2016 until February 2017. During this period train services will continue to operate, on weekdays only, between Gospel Oak and South Tottenham and from 24th September 2016 the whole line will be closed. When it reopens to traffic in early February, the Overhead Line Equipment (OHLE) and power supply systems will still be under test and commissioning, requiring continuing weekend closures and are not expected to be available for electric trains to use until June 2017. Passenger services will continue to be provided by the existing 2-car diesel trains on the same timetable until spring 2018 when new 4-car electric trains are delivered.

The footbridge across Walthamstow Queen's Road station will be closed to pedestrians from 4th June 2016 until early February 2017.

TfL has decided to change the routing of the two existing rail replacement bus services to shorten journey times and reduce the effects of traffic congestion, but these alterations will leave several stations without a rail replacement bus service. It is understood that TfL is putting the revised services out to tender around now with the commencement date being 4th June.

Revised Rail Replacement Bus Route 'T' Barking - Walthamstow Central

Daily from Saturday 4th June 2016, every 15 minutes, but every 10 minutes in peak periods.

- Barking Station
- Woodgrange Park station
- Wanstead Park station
- Harrow Green, Leytonstone (for Leytonstone High Road station)
- Leyton Midland Road station
- Walthamstow Central, Selborne Road RRB bus stops

Buses will then run out of service to and from their layover point at St. James Street bus station in Courtenay Mews.

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Revised Rail Replacement Bus Service 'J' Gospel Oak - Seven Sisters

Weekends from Saturday 4th June 2016, then daily from 24th September. Double deck buses running every 15 minutes, but every 10 minutes at peak times.

- Highgate Road (for Gospel Oak station)
- Upper Holloway station
- Hornsey Road, junction with Hanley Road (for Crouch Hill station)
- Finsbury Park station
- Harringay Green Lanes station
- Seven Sisters station (High Road bus stops by Victoria Line entrance/exits)

Buses will then run out of service to and from their layover point at Ashley Road & Burdock Road by Tottenham Hale station.

TfL justifies providing no bus service between Walthamstow Central and South Tottenham by stating that the Victoria Line between Walthamstow Central and Seven Sisters is quicker. This overlooks the fact that while the weekday Gospel Oak – South Tottenham train service is running (6^{th} June – 23^{rd} September) passengers will have a 5-7 minute walk and a 8-10 minute Underground journey to link up with the Barking bus and vice versa.

BGORUG's initial thoughts are that the Barking bus (Route 'T') should:

- Have an additional stop for Leyton Underground station (Warren Road/Grove Green Road)
- Be extended, on days when the Gospel Oak South Tottenham train service is running, to South Tottenham station and on other days to Tottenham Hale to connect with an extended Route 'J' and also call at:
 - Walthamstow South Grove (for Walthamstow Queen's Road station)
 - Blackhorse Road station

The Gospel Oak bus (Route 'J') should be extended in service from Seven Sisters to Tottenham Hale to provide a connection with an extended Barking bus (Route 'T').

TfL have told Stella Creasy MP that affected passengers will be allowed to pass through Zone I without additional charge.

BGORUG also thinks Crouch Hill passengers should also be granted free travel on bus routes 210, W3 & W7. We also think that a Monday – Friday express bus linking Barking with Tottenham Hale would be useful for passengers. Running from Barking every 30 minutes 06:00 - 10:30 and every 30 minutes from Tottenham Hale 15:30 - 20:00. What do you think?

BGORUG wants to hear passengers' views. Should affected passengers be given free travel on other bus routes or Underground lines? We are meeting TfL on 10th March so please let us know what you think. Either email direct or post on our website *Have Your Say!* message board.

Glenn Wallis Secretary