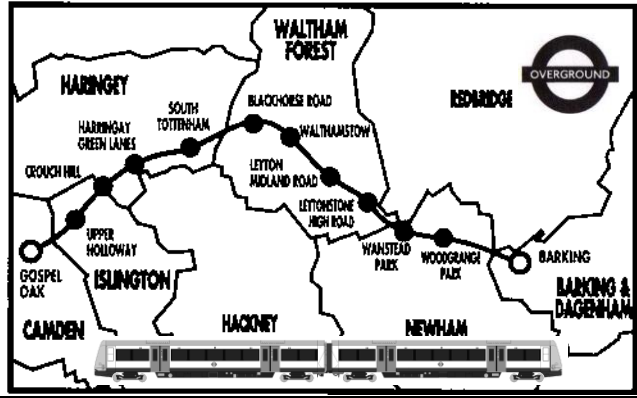


**BARKING – GOSPEL OAK
RAIL USER GROUP**
FOUNDED 1964

Chair: Graham Larkbey

Secretary: Glenn Wallis
(020) 8529 2361; 07789 791224

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



Photography © BGORUG



**NEWS
RELEASE**

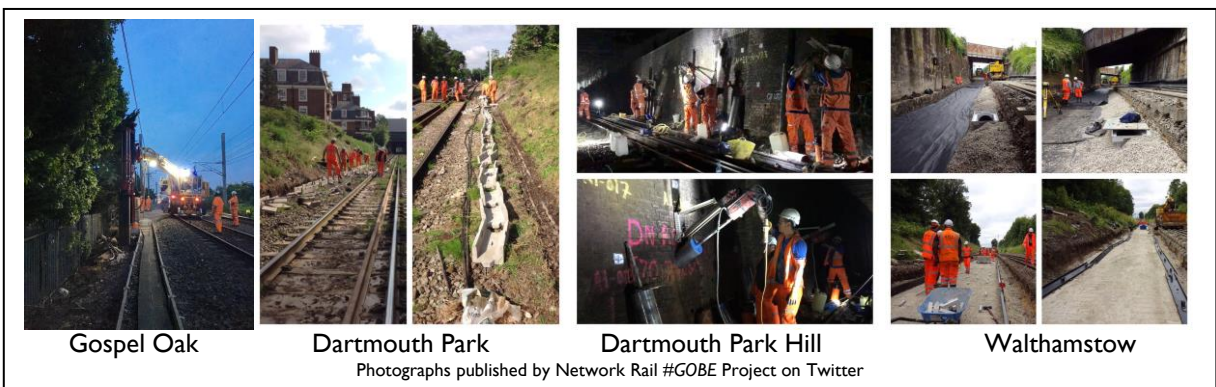
12th September
2016



**5-MONTH LOCAL OVERGROUND
CLOSURE STARTS IN 2 WEEKS!**

**MANY FACE PAYING MORE IN FARES
FOR WORSE JOURNEYS**

**GOSPEL OAK – BARKING LINE CLOSES ON
24TH SEPTEMBER UNTIL 30TH JANUARY 2017**





GOSPEL OAK – BARKING LINE CLOSURES ON 24TH SEPTEMBER UNTIL NEXT FEBRUARY MANY FACE PAYING MORE IN FARES FOR WORSE JOURNEYS

The Barking – Gospel Oak Overground line has been closed between Barking and South Tottenham since 4th June this year. Now, the rest of the line, between Gospel Oak and South Tottenham, which has only been running during the week since then, will be shut on 24th September as well. The whole line will then remain closed until the beginning of February 2017.

The line is being closed so that Network Rail can carry out the civil engineering work necessary to equip the line, the last passenger route in north east London to be diesel only, to carry electrically powered trains, supplied from 25,000 volt AC overhead electric wires. Transport for London will also be extending the platforms so that longer trains, due in 2018, will be able to use them^[1].

Since Transport for London (TfL)^[2] took responsibility for the service in 2007, passenger numbers have grown, until just before this year's closure, it was carrying over 10,000 passengers per day, including many school children, especially girls travelling to La Sainte Union Catholic School in Highgate.

Now, all these passengers have to find alternative ways to make their journeys, which will inevitably take up to an hour longer, be very inconvenient and more controversially, cost more than what had been a quick trip on the train.

The Barking – Gospel Oak Rail User Group (BGORUG)^[3], which believes passengers should pay no more in fares than they did before the closure of the line has accused TfL of making inadequate arrangements for the displaced passengers while the line is closed:

- Failing to provide a rail replacement bus service to all stations^[4]
- Offering only certain passengers a chance of any refund of their additional travel costs – BGORUG estimates that many passengers are paying an extra **£15** per week, which could amount to **£510** over the full closure^[5].

BGORUG Secretary, Glenn Wallis, said, “While we fully support the upgrade works, BGORUG believes that TfL are unfairly penalising passengers who have no choice in the matter. A few who are now paying more because of travelling through central London fare zone 1 are being offered refunds on the zone 1 element of their fare, but are having an exasperating time trying to claim.”

Thanks to the intervention of Deputy London Assembly Chair Jennette Arnold OBE, Mayor Sadiq Khan announced on 20th July that TfL would give zone 1 refunds to many more affected passengers but so far this change has not been implemented.

“BGORUG welcomes this change, providing TfL actually delivers it”, said Glenn Wallis, “But the great majority of passengers will still be paying out more on bus, underground and rail fares in zones 2, 3 & 4 and they need help too.”

Questioned by Jennette Arnold on 20th July, the Mayor reported that:

- By 6th June TfL had identified 1,247 passengers who used the rail service at least three times per week in the previous eight weeks
- By 4th July 559 of those above had qualified for refunds and 269 of these had received refunds
- By 4th July TfL had received 45 calls from those who had qualified for refunds and a further 80 from those who were not included in the initial 1,247 but following their call were accepted as qualifying for refunds





GOSPEL OAK – BARKING LINE CLOSURES ON 24TH SEPTEMBER UNTIL NEXT FEBRUARY MANY FACE PAYING MORE IN FARES FOR WORSE JOURNEYS

The final closure of the Gospel Oak – South Tottenham section of the line from 24th September will increase the numbers of passengers affected, so far TfL has not explained what arrangements are being made for them.

“The only relief on the horizon for these passengers is the Mayor’s new 2-bus trips in 1-hour *Hopper* fare, which will reduce costs for many users travelling by bus in zones 2-4,” said Glenn Wallis.

“Compared with Network Rail’s actual engineering work, which seems to be progressing well, TfL’s handling of arrangements for passengers has been poor; replacement buses which don’t serve all the stations and run at low frequencies and fare refund arrangements which are inadequate and poorly administered. All this adds to the problems of commuters struggling to get to school, college or work. The original publicity for the first stage closure (Barking – South Tottenham) was botched and now it seems only a paltry attempt is being made to reach passengers prior to this total line closure. A single “drop-in” session to offer advice to passengers was being held at Gospel Oak, Upper Holloway, Crouch Hill and Harringay Green Lanes last week. The press release of these was issued on 1st September, after the local newspaper deadlines had passed! The last session is at South Tottenham today (16:30 – 18:30). Perhaps TfL is too embarrassed to face its customers?”

- ENDS -

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
GLENN WALLIS ON (020) 8529 2361
OR E-MAIL secretary@barking-gospeloak.org.uk

NOTES FOR EDITORS

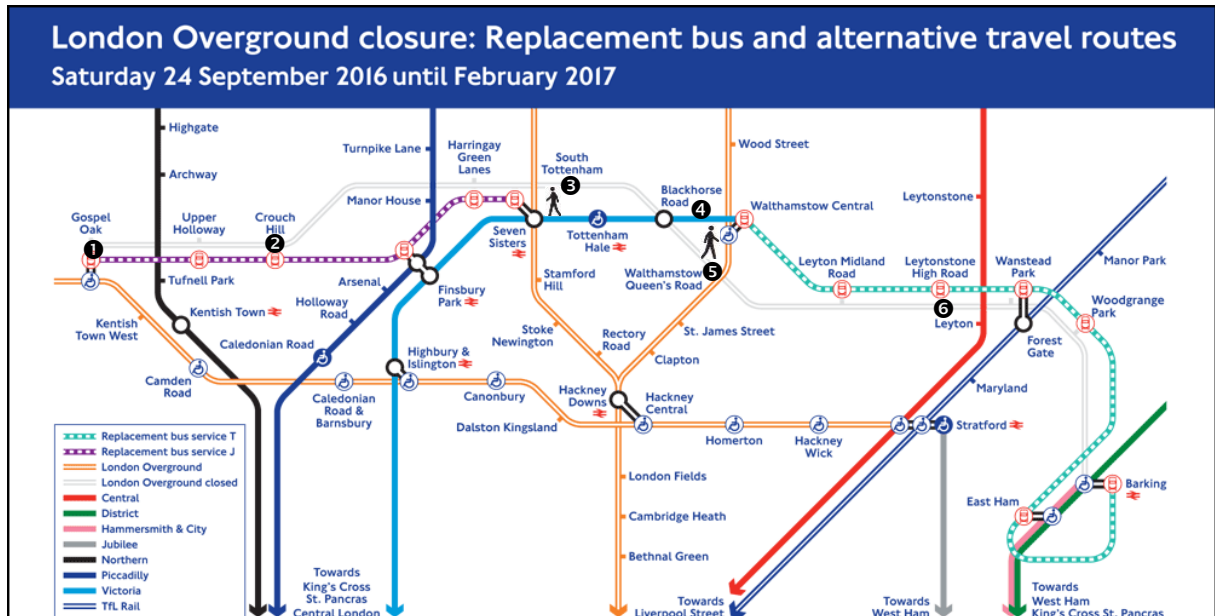
1. The works have been described in several rail industry magazines:
 - *RAIL* magazine, Issue 800, 11th May 2016
http://barking-gospeloak.org.uk/documents/20160511_Electrification.pdf
 - *RAIL* magazine, Issue 806, 3rd August 2016
http://barking-gospeloak.org.uk/documents/20160803_GoblinGetsWired.pdf
 - *Modern Railways*, September 2016
 - *Rail Engineer*, September 2016, page 23
<https://issuu.com/railmedia/docs/tre-september-2016/1>
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 chosen Arriva Rail London Ltd (Deutsche Bahn) to operate the new London Rail Concession from November 2016.
3. 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. The Government finally approved electrification on 26th June 2013. Work commenced in 2015 and it is hoped that electric passenger trains will have commenced operation no later than mid-2018.





GOSPEL OAK – BARKING LINE CLOSES ON 24TH SEPTEMBER UNTIL NEXT FEBRUARY MANY FACE PAYING MORE IN FARES FOR WORSE JOURNEYS

4.



- ① Highgate Road, bus stops GN & GZ, 7-minute walk from Gospel Oak station
- ② Hornsey Road, bus stops C & N, 15-minute walk from Crouch Hill station
- ③ South Tottenham is a 5-minute walk from Seven Sisters Road bus stops A & B for replacement bus J to Highgate Road for Gospel Oak and Seven Sisters station for the Victoria Line to Walthamstow Central for replacement bus T to Barking
- ④ Victoria Line to Seven Sisters for replacement bus J to Highgate Road for Gospel Oak or Walthamstow Central for replacement bus T to Barking
- ⑤ 10-minute walk to/from Walthamstow Central for:
 - Victoria Line to Seven Sisters for replacement bus J to Highgate Road for Gospel Oak
 - Replacement bus T to Barking
- ⑥ Harrow Green bus stops K & B are a 10-minute walk from Leytonstone High Road station

Two rail replacement bus services are provided by TfL:

- **Route J** Highgate Road (5 minute from Gospel Oak station) – Upper Holloway station – Hornsey Road (15 minute walk from Crouch Hill station) – Finsbury Park station – Harringay Green Lanes station – Seven Sisters station (5 minute walk from South Tottenham station), every 15 minutes weekdays and every 30 minutes weekends & public holidays;
- **Route T** Barking station – East Ham station – Woodgrange Park station – Wanstead Park station – Harrow Green (10 minute walk from Leytonstone High Road station) – Leyton Midland Road station – Walthamstow Central station (10 minute walk from Walthamstow Queen's Road station), every 15 minutes weekdays and every 20 minutes weekends & public holidays



Passengers must use the Victoria Line to transfer between these two rail replacement bus services and to access Blackhorse Road station.

For more information see: http://barking-gospeloak.org.uk/images/20160819_RRBS.pdf

5. See: http://barking-gospeloak.org.uk/documents/20160812_August_2016_update.pdf

