

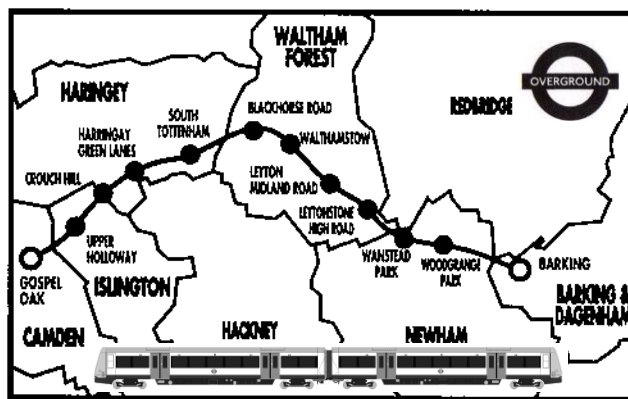
BARKING – GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP

FOUNDED 1964

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NEWS RELEASE

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2016



IT'S THE LAST TRAIN TO GOSPEL OAK!

And if you miss Saturday morning's
00:10 South Tottenham to Gospel Oak Overground,
there'll never be another one...until 30th January 2017!

- ❖ Entire Barking – Gospel Oak Line to be closed until February 2017
 - ❖ £133m project to electrify NE London's last diesel-only rail line
 - ❖ Huge disruption for line's 10,000+ daily passengers with no easy alternative routes, causing increased travel costs for many
 - ❖ Use replacement bus services or lose them!
 - ❖ 5 months of pain & 15 more months to wait for any gain!
- ❖ Entire Barking – Gospel Oak rail line to be closed until February 2017
- The Barking – South Tottenham section was closed back in June, while the Gospel Oak – South Tottenham section remained open on weekdays only. Now the whole line will stay closed until the beginning of February 2017.





IT'S THE LAST TRAIN TO GOSPEL OAK!

❖ £133m project to electrify NE London's last diesel-only rail line

The line is the only one left in north east London that can only carry diesel powered trains. The £108m project to equip the line with a 25,000 volts AC overhead power supply was authorised in 2013. The electric overhead power supply is planned to be ready for use in mid-2017. Transport for London (TfL)^[1] is contributing a further £25m to adapt station platforms for new 4-carriage electrically powered trains due in service by mid-2018.

❖ Huge disruption for line's 10,000+ daily passengers with no easy alternative routes, causing increased travel costs for many

Now all these travellers^[2] have had to find alternatives ways to get to work, school or college. The Barking – Gospel Oak Rail User Group (BGORUG)^[3] believes it unfair of TfL to expect these passengers, many are low wage workers, to pay more for more time consuming (up to an hour longer) and inconvenient journeys for such a long period of time. BGORUG accuses TfL of:

- Failing to provide a rail replacement bus service to all stations
- 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^[4].

❖ Use replacement bus services or lose them!

TfL's goal in planning for the closure seemed to be spending the bare minimum on arrangements for passengers while the line was closed. This scrutiny to cut costs continues as the already inadequate rail replacement bus services are to be reduced.

The rail replacement bus services are split into two, non-connecting routes which do not serve three stations and leave passengers with long walks to/from three others^[5].

From 26th September buses on Route 'T' (Barking – Walthamstow Central) will have their Monday – Friday daytime frequency cut from every 10-12 minutes to every 15 minutes. Also from 26th September passenger loadings on the Monday – Friday Route 'J' [Highgate Road (for Gospel Oak) – Seven Sisters station] will be monitored with a view to reducing the frequency from every 15 minutes to every 20 minutes from 31st October.

❖ 5-months pain & 15 more months to wait for any gain!

The line is expected to reopen at the beginning of February 2017, but passengers will continue to travel in the seriously overcrowded 2-carriage diesel powered trains because the overhead electric power supply will not be available for use until mid-2017. Also in mid-2017 new electric trains will start entering service on the TfL Liverpool Street – Shenfield service, in advance of the opening of the Crossrail tunnel, making the 35-year old electric 4-carriage trains currently operating this service surplus.

Back in March 2016, BGORUG asked TfL to redeploy these redundant 4-carriage electric trains to the Barking – Gospel Oak service as and when they became available, so relieving the chronic overcrowding at least a year ahead of the arrival of the new trains ordered for the route, these being due to enter service in spring 2018. So far TfL has refused to do so - it seems content to prolong the chronic overcrowding far longer than necessary^[6].

See photographs of these soon to be redundant Shenfield Line trains at the top of page 3.





IT'S THE LAST TRAIN TO GOSPEL OAK!



Soon to be redundant from TfL Rail Liverpool Street – Shenfield services from mid-2017, some of these 35-year old Class 315 4-car electric trains could be temporarily redeployed to the Barking – Gospel Oak line until the new trains for this service can take over in mid-2018.

- ENDS -

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. 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. TfL has chosen Arriva Rail London Ltd (Deutsche Bahn) to operate the 2nd *London Rail Concession* from November 2016.
2. Before the closure of the Barking – South Tottenham section on 4th June, Barking – Gospel Oak trains were carrying over 10,000 passengers per day, in peak times the 2-carriage diesel powered trains were so grossly overcrowded that passengers were often left behind on platforms (see photos at top of Page 1).
The reason for the service's great popularity was that it was the only orbital rail line serving the east London boroughs of Barking & Dagenham, Newham and Waltham Forest, linking them with the north London boroughs of Haringey, Islington and Camden (see map at top of page 1). It was much faster than using any combination of bus and/or tube services, had Oyster zonal rail fares and was on the tube map.
3. Formed in 1964 as the Barking – Kentish Town Line Committee to fight the Beeching report's proposed withdrawal of passenger services, 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, finally approved by the Government on 26th June 2013. Work started in late 2015 and it is hoped that electric passenger trains will have commenced operation no later than mid-2018.
4. See: http://barking-gospeloak.org.uk/documents/20160812_August_2016_update.pdf

NOTES 5 & 6 FOLLOW ON PAGE 4

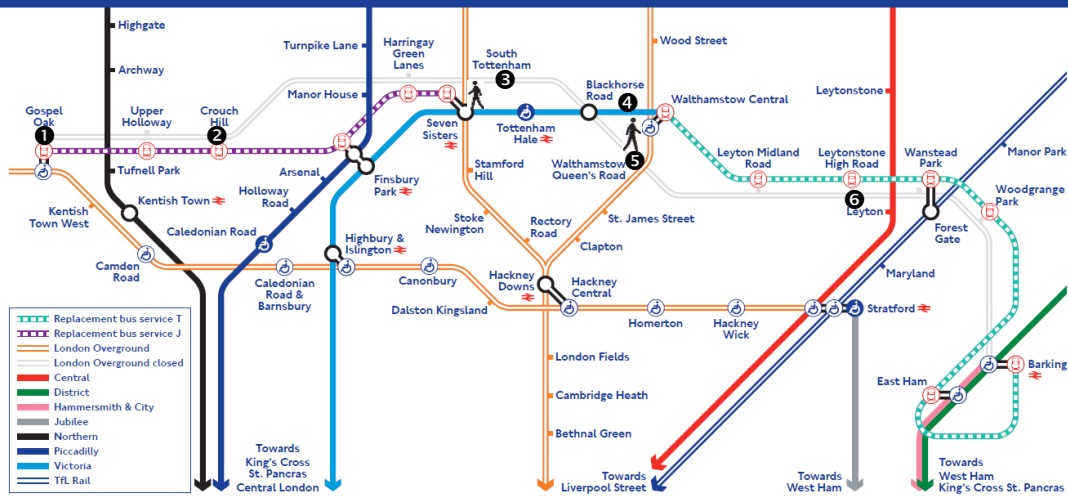




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5.

London Overground closure: Replacement bus and alternative travel routes Saturday 24 September 2016 until February 2017



- ① Highgate Road, bus stops 7-minute walk from Gospel Oak station; stop GN towards Seven Sisters & alighting point stop GZ from Seven Sisters
- ② Hornsey Road, bus stops 15-minute walk from Crouch Hill station; stop C towards Seven Sisters & stop N (Fairbridge Road) towards Highgate Road for Gospel Oak
- ③ South Tottenham is a 5-minute walk from Seven Sisters Road bus stop A (alighting point stop 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 which departs from stop C in the bus station
- 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 from stop C in the bus station
- ⑥ Harrow Green, bus stops are a 10-minute walk from Leytonstone High Road station, stop K towards Barking & stop P towards Walthamstow Central

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

6. See http://barking-gospeloak.org.uk/documents/20160331_4car_trains.pdf

