

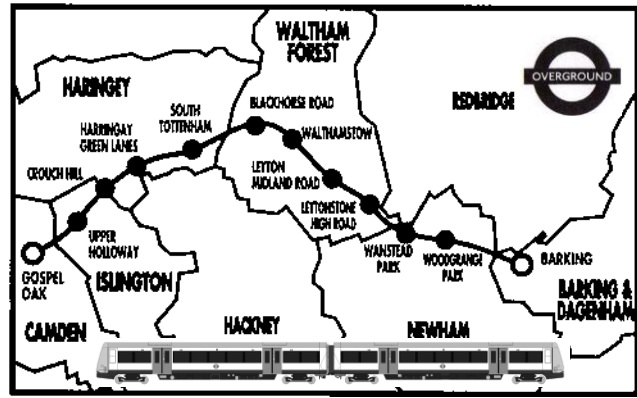
BARKING – GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP

FOUNDED 1964

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NEWS RELEASE

6th February 2017



RAIL DISRUPTION TO CONTINUE AS ELECTRIFICATION PROJECT OVERRUNS

AFTER 9-MONTH CLOSURE TRAINS TO START RUNNING AGAIN BUT DISRUPTION IS NOT OVER

Although pleased that train services are about to start running again, the Barking – Gospel Oak Rail User Group (BGORUG)^[1] is concerned that disruption for passengers is not over. Network Rail^[2] electrification works which started in autumn 2015 and were due to be completed this July are now to be prolonged for several more months while engineers finish the job.

The line, which carried around 10,000 passengers daily, was closed between Barking and South Tottenham on 4th June 2016, the closure of the tracks between South Tottenham and Gospel Oak followed on 24th September 2016 and the whole line has been shut ever since.

BGORUG Secretary Glenn Wallis said, “With rail replacement buses that missed out half the stations and limited refund arrangements, passengers have been left to largely fend for themselves. Now we learn that although trains are to start running again, the passengers’ pain is far from over.”

Trains are expected to start running in the last week of February, but so much work is still to be done that weekend and/or longer closures will have to continue so that electric freight trains can run by winter 2017/18, followed by new 4-carriage electric passenger trains in late spring 2018.

Photographs of the current state of the line follow on Pages 3 - 5. These may be used by the media but BGORUG should be credited. Contact the Secretary for more information, if required.





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Work outstanding at the time of publication:

- Completion of platform extensions (except at Barking, Blackhorse Road and Gospel Oak)
- Completion of step-free access works at Blackhorse Road (completion date: April 2017)
- Completion of erection of overhead wires support masts
- Completion of fitting out each mast with support arms for the electric wires
- Installation of 25,000volts AC contact and support wires
- Repairs to damaged sewer in Walthamstow
- Raising the Crouch Hill road bridge

“Generally, the civil engineering aspects of the project have gone well”, said Glenn Wallis. “It is the work connected with installing the electrification infrastructure that is well behind.”

The original work plan set out by Network Rail back in February 2016 envisaged that all of the electrification infrastructure would be in place by this month, with diesel trains resuming and the period onwards to the end of June being used for testing and commissioning the overhead wires.

Other problems have been accidental breaches of sewers in Walthamstow by pile drivers and the discovery that there will be insufficient clearance for the overhead wires under the road bridge at Crouch Hill station. It is believed that Network Rail has received a temporary dispensation to run electric trains under the bridge pending a later closure to raise the height of the bridge.

“BGORUG expects an imminent joint announcement from Network Rail and Transport for London (TfL) confirming that train services will recommence from Monday 27th February on Mondays to Fridays only, with continuing closures during weekends and bank holidays. It is difficult to predict what form these later closures may take (some may be longer than a weekend) as there are impending Crossrail (Elizabeth Line) works due at Stratford that require freight trains to be diverted to the Barking – Gospel Oak Line.”

“At the moment, we are also unclear as to whether Blackhorse Road Overground platforms will be opened to passengers before April when the step-free access works are due for completion. Meanwhile any regular users who have had to travel via zone 1 and not received any refunds/Oyster credits should contact Transport for London^[3]”, said Glenn Wallis.



A single line overhead mast near Crouch Hill, note registration arm tied up with blue string! 2nd February 2017.

- ENDS -

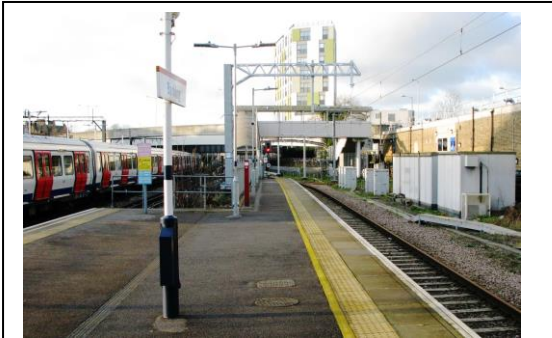
The following recent photographs are grouped by boroughs, Barking & Dagenham, Camden, Haringey, Islington, Newham and Waltham Forest





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Barking & Dagenham



Barking station, 14th January 2017. The newly electrified line to Gospel Oak is on the right.



Barking, 14th January 2017. The line from Gospel Oak is to the left of the District Line train.

Camden



Gospel Oak on 13th January 2017. The platform line has yet to receive overhead wires.



The railway through Dartmouth Park awaits the overhead wires on 2nd February 2017.

Haringey



Awaiting the wires at Harringay Park Junction. Harringay Green Lanes station in far distance. The curved track leads to Harringay station and the East Coast Main Line. 2nd February 2017.



A new Bridge 32 was installed over the Lea Navigation during the New Year holiday. It is still awaiting the electric wires on 2nd February 2017.





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Islington

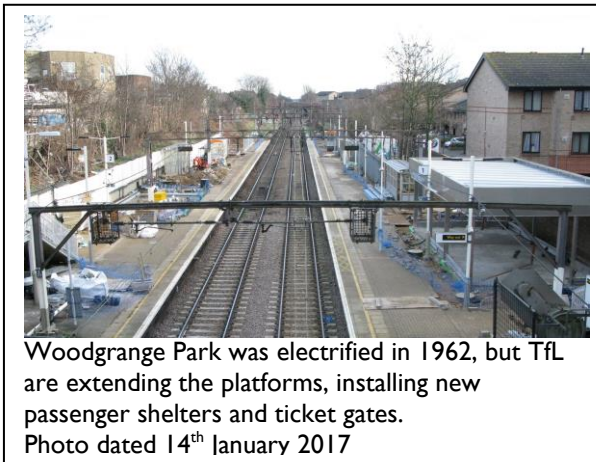


Upper Holloway, 9th January 2017.



Crouch Hill has two new passenger shelters from TfL, but no wires as yet. Photo dated 2nd February 2017.

Newham

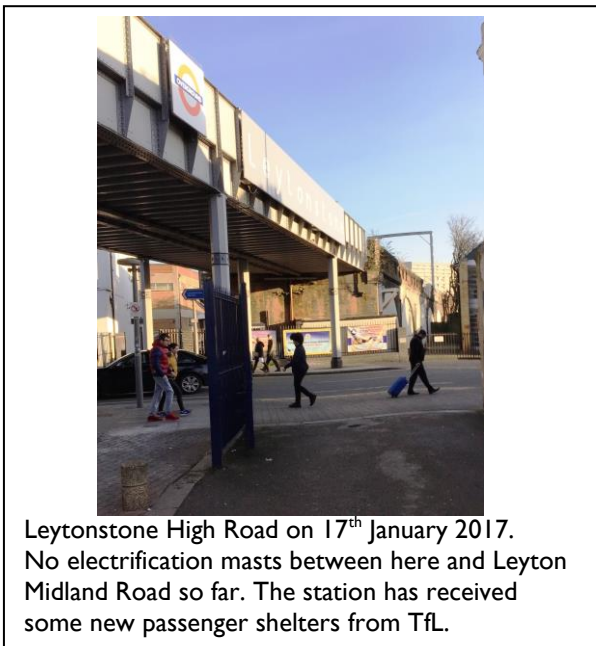


Woodgrange Park was electrified in 1962, but TfL are extending the platforms, installing new passenger shelters and ticket gates. Photo dated 14th January 2017



On 14th January 2017 new portal structures await their fittings and wires at Wanstead Park station. New passenger shelters have been installed on the platforms by TfL.

Waltham Forest



Leytonstone High Road on 17th January 2017. No electrification masts between here and Leyton Midland Road so far. The station has received some new passenger shelters from TfL.



Leyton Midland Road on 5th January 2017. The station has received new passenger shelters from TfL. The electrification masts stretch back as far as Queen's Road, Walthamstow.





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Walthamstow Queen's Road station's lowered and extended platforms looked nearly ready apart from platform lights on 30th January 2017.



Lift towers under construction at Blackhorse Road station on 6th January 2017.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT
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NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. 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.
2. Network Rail is the government owned national rail infrastructure company.
3. 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 1st London Rail Concession to London Overground Rail Operations Ltd (LOROL), a joint Hong Kong/German owned venture, to operate the London Overground network from 11th November 2007 until March 2014, subsequently extended to 13th November 2016. TfL chose Arriva Rail London Ltd (Deutsche Bahn) to operate the 2nd London Rail Concession which started on 13th November 2016.

