

BGORUG TRAIN CRISIS BULLETIN 23RD JANUARY 2019

GROWING TRAIN CRISIS CAUSES A STIR, EXCEPT AT TFL!

The last Train Crisis Bulletin (14th January <https://tinyurl.com/y9keaqvi>) received a big reaction. At the time of writing, BGORUG's Twitter feed (@RidingtheGoblin) has 1,246 followers and at least seven local papers have posted stories on their websites and one broadcaster has shown interest. But in spite of a request seven days ago, Transport for London (TfL) has not supplied any information about what is planned for the Barking – Gospel Oak train service when the next of the line's Class 172 diesel trains transfers



The last unit to leave the Barking – Gospel Oak fleet was 172 006, seen here at Canonbury on Saturday 10th November 2018, en route from Willesden depot to Bombardier's Ilford facility, for the installation of a toilet prior to transfer to West Midlands Trains Tyseley depot [CJ]

out of the London Overground fleet in less than a week's time. This will leave only five units to operate a weekday timetable which requires six trains if planned cancellations are to be avoided.

GLIMMER OF HOPE FOR CLASS 710?

It is understood that Bombardier has loaded version 27 of the Class 710 Train Control Management System (TCMS) software onto one of the units at Willesden, thought to be 710 265. So far this unit has run over 900 apparently fault free miles, mostly on the West Coast Main Line. To be officially delivered to London Overground, it has to achieve 2,000 fault free miles. 710 269 has now appeared on local tests in North London.



Left: TfL has posted on its London Overground website page a photograph of 710 265 passing through Walthamstow Queen's Road on a test run on 8th January.

IS 4-CAR CLASS 378 TfL'S PLAN 'B'?

With the exception of the Barking – Gospel Oak line, London Overground's orbital routes are operated by a fleet of 57 5-car Class 378 electric trains dating back to 2009. The first units were delivered as Class 378/0 3-car sets. They were then made up to Class 378/2 4-car units in 2010 as more new 4-car units were delivered. Finally all Class 378s were increased to 5-car length in 2014-15.



378 223 runs into Gospel Oak with a Stratford bound service on 28th February 2017. [KF]

Last autumn TfL started a Class 378 refresh programme, involving heavy cleaning of the interior, fitting new Class 710 style seating moquette and external repaint in pseudo Class

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710 livery. At a meeting with TfL on 19th November, BGORUG suggested that the *refresh* programme be suspended and the Class 378 thus released reduced to 4-cars and used to bolster the Barking – Gospel Oak service, allowing the reinstatement of the cancelled weekend services and the weekday peak – time extra trains (*PIXC-busters*). TfL thought this unnecessary as they were still confident that Class 710s would be entering public service by the end of December. Of course, this did not happen!



[Photo DPE Rail]

378 211 was used by Network Rail sub-contractor DPE Rail to test the Overhead Line Equipment on the Barking – Gospel Oak route, seen here at Upper Holloway on 11th January 2018



'B' end power car 38432 from unit 378 232 was spotted in Willesden depot in company with a Class 710 unit on 19th December [C]

On 19th December, Class 378 'B' motor carriage 38432 was seen stabled in a siding in front of a Class 710 unit at Willesden depot. This carriage was new in 2015 and put into 378 232 to make it a 5-car unit. On 2nd January, 378 232 appeared on a number of overnight test runs on the Barking – Gospel Oak route in 4-car formation. These were obviously successful, as it reappeared on 8th January and again on 23rd January carrying out Platform/Train Interface (PTI) tests at stations, including Gospel Oak bay platform. In between appearances it received a quick internal refresh at Bombardier's Ilford facility.

It is believed that the PTI tests did throw up some issues and a signal sighting problem, but it is thought that none of the problems are insurmountable. Thus far no London Overground drivers have driven an electric train over the Barking – Gospel Oak line, so some driver training will be required before 378 232 could start carrying passengers. It must be doubtful that all this outstanding work can be completed in time for 378 232 to seamlessly replace the next Class 172 to come off sublease in a matter of days. It is not known if any further Class 378s will be reduced to 4-cars for the Barking service.



4-car 378 232 stands at Walthamstow Queen's Road down platform while London Overground staff conduct PTI tests on 8th January [C]



378 232 visited Bombardier's Ilford plant and appeared with an interior *make-over*. The new Class 710 seating moquette can just be seen. Walthamstow Queen's Road in early hours of 23rd January [CK]

DECEMBER 2019 TIMETABLE

Bids for the December 2019 timetable have to be submitted to Network Rail in March. A week ago BGORUG was offered another meeting by TfL and this was accepted, with a request for the December 2019 timetable to be placed on the agenda. TfL has yet to offer any dates for this meeting.