

Passenger Newsletter

Summer 2018

TRAIN BOSS CAN'T KEEP HIS PROMISES! GHOST TRAINS LAST 6 WEEKS! • WHERE ARE NEW TRAINS?

“We will continue to operate additional peak services on the Gospel Oak to Barking line until the new, larger capacity electric trains are introduced later this summer. While these additional services are not timetabled, they will operate with a similar frequency as they do now. We are committed to continue with the current level of service, wherever possible, ahead of the new electric trains coming into service”.
 Jonathan Fox, Director of Rail, Transport for London, 22nd May 2018

When Transport for London (TfL) finally published its Summer Barking—Gospel Oak timetable, late on Friday 18th May, there was shock that five peak-time services were no longer included.

TfL said that the five peak trains were excluded from the published timetable because they were temporary and not expected to run for the full duration of the timetable, which ends on 8th December. As soon as the long overdue new 4-car electric trains entered service “later this summer”, the five trains would be withdrawn.

Had the overhead wires and the new 4-car trains been available on time, Barking—Gospel Oak passengers would probably have had a new timetable to match the new North London Line timetable that started on 20th May.

Timetable changes 

New timetable from Sunday 20 May 2018

Gospel Oak to Barking route

Trains continue to run every 15 minutes until 22:00 daily, then every 20 minutes.

Five additional peak-time trains, which run to reduce congestion, are not shown in the new timetable, as they will not be needed when new, longer trains are introduced on this route later this summer.

Until then we intend to continue running these extra trains at similar times but please check services before you travel.

To download train times search online for ‘London Overground timetables’.

LONG CLOSURE REFUNDS CAMPAIGN FINALLY PAYS OFF!

Ever since the first electrification closures were announced back in 2016, BGORUG has been trying to convince TfL to offer refunds to **ALL** passengers forced to pay more in fares while the line was closed.

TfL said that they would only refund passengers who had alternative routes that went into Zone 1. This ignored many passengers whose alternative routes did not go into Zone 1 but still incurred extra bus, tube or train fares.

BGORUG was grateful to have the support of London Assembly Member for Hackney, Islington & Waltham Forest, Jennette Arnold. We both doggedly kept up the dialogue of persuasion with TfL and finally obtained agreement that **all** affected passengers could claim refunds.



Left: BGORUG Secretary, Glenn Wallis, explains the problem to Jennette Arnold OBE AM at Walthamstow Queen’s Road station.

If you wish to claim back additional fares paid while the train service was withdrawn during June 2016 – February 2017,

September 2017 – October 2017 & November 2017 – January 2018, complete the online Oyster complaints form at www.tfl.gov.uk or write to:

TfL Customer Service, 4th Floor, 14 Pier Walk, London SE10 0ES

If TfL are unable to resolve the matter to your satisfaction, you can appeal to London TravelWatch by completing the online complaints form at www.londontravelwatch.org.uk or write to:

London TravelWatch, 169 Union Street, London, SE1 0LL

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM CONTINUED
 Do you wish to receive communications by e-mail? YES / NO*
 e-mail address:

My usual journey is between & stations

I enclose my subscription of £5.00 plus optional donation of £.....

Date: Signed:
 Post to: The Treasurer, BGORUG, 55 Trelawney Road, Hainault, Ilford IG6 2NJ
 *Delete as appropriate

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Retaining the existing Barking—Gospel Oak times has in many cases led to worsened connections at Gospel Oak, lengthening journey times for many.

Six weeks after Jonathan Fox made his commitment to BGORUG, the five additional peak-time trains were quietly withdrawn after Friday 29th June.

These services could no longer be operated because one of the eight 2-car trains that maintain the service had been taken back by the leasing company that owned it. With only seven 2-car trains left, there was no spare train to operate the five peak-time trains or to replace another train should it break down. All the 2-car trains will be transferred to another operator in the West Midlands by November.

“This is the final kick in the teeth for our passengers,” said BGORUG Secretary, Glenn Wallis. “Months of closures over the last two years for electrification and now we get a reduced service! BGORUG no longer has any confidence in TfL’s promises.”

BGORUG is seeking an urgent meeting with senior TfL management .

WAIT FOR NEW TRAINS GOES ON AND ON!

As “summer” becomes “November”!



One month after Jonathan Fox gave BGORUG the assurance quoted on the front page, he announced that the new trains would be in service “by November”!

Manufacturer, Bombardier, was contracted to deliver the first of the new 4-car electric trains to London Overground at the start of the year, but to date none have been delivered.

TfL staged a press event at London Overground’s Willesden depot on 20th June where Jonathan Fox announced the new target delivery date against a background of one of the new trains that had been towed from the Derby factory where it was built back in February. The next

day it was towed back to Derby to join around 30 more such trains in store.

Deliveries are being held up by the inability of Bombardier to obtain approval for the train, the Class 710 *Aventra*, to operate on the national network.

The first Class 710 off the production line was delivered to the Network Rail test centre at Asfordby in Leicestershire last December. It had to pass Network Rail’s acceptance tests before it could be allowed onto the national network. The train is still at Asfordby and has yet to gain Network Rail approval. It is said that there are problems with the software in the train management system.

“This is a major embarrassment for TfL”, said Glenn Wallis, Secretary of the Barking – Gospel Oak Rail User Group

(BGORUG). “Up until now the problems with the Class 710 have been masked by the delays to the completion of the Barking – Gospel Oak electrification.”

Network Rail’s electrification of the Barking – Gospel Oak line was finally approved for use by the Rail Regulator (ORR) in early June, a full year later than originally planned.

“BGORUG is fully aware that the existing Barking – Gospel Oak fleet of eight diesel trains has to move to West Midlands Railway by November”, said Glenn Wallis. “It is therefore

deeply disappointing that TfL is unable to provide a firm schedule for the introduction of the Class 710 into passenger service. Considering that testing started last December, it is

also concerning that Bombardier has yet to obtain Network Rail approval for the Class 710 to operate on the national network.”

The Chair of BGORUG, Graham Larkbey, said, “What was the point of TfL staging the Willesden event when the only new announcement turned out to be the colour of the train’s upholstery?”

CLASS 710 BACKGROUND

The first of 54 new Class 710 trains for Transport for London’s London Overground service took to the works’ test track at the Derby plant of Bombardier Transportation of 7th November 2017. These new electric *Aventra* type trains are a development of the *Capitalstar* trains that have been operating London Overground’s orbital services for several years and, like those trains, the new ones will have all longitudinal seating and walk-through connections between carriages.

When delivered, the full Class 710 fleet will comprise:

- 18 four-car trains for the Barking – Gospel Oak and Euston – Watford Junction services. This will relieve

overcrowding, allow the Barking – Gospel Oak service to be extended to Barking Riverside in 2021 and the Euston – Watford Junction service to be increased from 3 trains per hour (tph) to 4tph in December 2018.

- 30 four-car trains to take over Liverpool Street – Cheshunt (via Seven Sisters), Chingford and Enfield Town services.
- 6 five-carriage trains to help provide improved service frequencies on the orbital routes (Stratford – Richmond/ Clapham Junction and Highbury & Islington – New Cross/Clapham Junction/ Crystal Palace/West Croydon).

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM or download form from www.barking-gospelok.org.uk

I wish to become a member of the Barking—Gospel Oak Line User Group and agree to abide the rules and constitution of the Group

Name: MR / MRS / MS*

Address:

Telephone Home / Work*:

Mobile:

Postcode:

* Delete as appropriate

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