

NEWS UPDATE - July, 2006

New Improved Service Beds In

The improved service has been an instant hit, apart from a couple of unfortunate occasions when the 08 03 from Barking (one of our busiest trains) was cancelled. To recap, trains run every 20 minutes during the height of the rush hour, and the Mon-Fri evening service is half-hourly all the way through, apart from one gap of an hour between the 22 08 and 23 08 from Barking. We have suggested a way in which that might be filled, together with a proposed extra 22 55 Gospel Oak. Weekend services are basically unchanged, but we hope subsequent improvement packages will include these as well – particularly an earlier start and later finish on Sundays. For some reason, new timetable posters did not go up on station platforms as they usually do; we filled the gap by printing off our own and putting those up, but the full-size ones ought to have been up from Day One. Silverlink's website was also rather tardy in making the new timetable available.

A Whole New Era Beckons!

At our meeting on May 9th, our guest speaker was Hugh Chaplain (Head of Rail Franchising at Transport for London), who outlined TfL's plans for the Silverlink Metro group of routes from autumn 2007 onwards. Fasten your seatbelts and hold onto your hats – this is heady stuff. Basically, by December 2010 TfL intend to have 4 trains per hour running on the Richmond-Stratford route, plus 4 trains an hour on a new Queens Park-Stratford route via Primrose Hill and Camden Road. Our service is also planned to become 4 trains per hour, running between Barking and Clapham Junction via Willesden Junction. The idea is to get this vastly-improved service pattern in place in time for it to bed down before the Olympics – but obviously it will bring massive benefits to the whole area for years afterwards. Stations will be improved and extended where necessary to accommodate longer trains, and other infrastructure improvements will be carried out in collaboration with Network Rail. Our line could even be electrified!

Proposed Cycle Restrictions

Still no word on Silverlink's revised proposals; we are scheduled to meet new Metro Route Director Tom Joyner in the next few weeks and will raise this then.

Station To Station

Walthamstow Queens Road's "pod" waiting area has now been installed. This is a shelter with glazed walls, a door and heating, and TfL have chosen WQR to see how such a building fares at such a location. A cycle shelter has also appeared at the entrance. And we understand from Waltham Forest council that the long-awaited direct pedestrian link between WQR's footbridge and Walthamstow Central should be constructed during this financial year. This has been a principal objective of ours for many years, and we have suggested that it be named Ray Dudley Way, in memory of one of the most dogged and enthusiastic campaigners for its construction who sadly died last year. We have objected to the proposal to demolish the booking office and station house at Crouch Hill – not only are they two of our few remaining historic structures, but the booking office may well be needed for TfL's station restaffing plans.

Leytonstone Festival – July 8th-16th

Music, drama, films, walks, talks, street events & parties....lots of fun for everyone! Find all the info at www.leytonstonefestival.org.uk – and get there by train to Leytonstone High Road.

Planning a Trip to Wales This Summer?

If so, try and work in a trip on the Heart of Wales line between Swansea and Shrewsbury, which goes right up through the middle of the country through superb scenery serving numerous villages and towns on the way. The perfect antidote to the hustle & bustle of London. We have established an informal twinning arrangement with their User Group, the Heart of Wales Line Travellers' Association (HOWLTA). See www.heart-of-wales.co.uk for all the details, including cheap fare offers!

Date of next Meeting

Tuesday September 19th, 7:15 pm to 9:00 pm at Barking Town Hall. All welcome – until then, enjoy the summer!

The Secretary at 35 Carr Road, London E17 5ER.

Thank you!