

Passenger Newsletter

4th Special electrification edition: Summer 2017

ANOTHER SIX MONTHS TO FINISH THE JOB! NETWORK RAIL ANNOUNCE CONTINUING WEEKEND CLOSURES & TWO LONG BLOCKADES

When the Barking — Gospel Oak rail line reopened on 27th February, Network Rail admitted that the electrification work was far from finished.

Now, some four months later, the government owned company has finally announced a plan to finish the work.

Weekend closures, which started back in June, will continue and – subject to

confirmation – there will be two continuous closures provisionally scheduled between 17th September – 22nd October and 27th November – 14th January.

One job that can be put off is the raising of the road bridge at Crouch Hill station. Network Rail has decided the 25,000 volts overhead cables can safely pass under it without having to jack the bridge up by 300mm, although the work will still have to be done sometime later.

There is still plenty of work that has to be done however. A number of support masts for the overhead wires are still needed east of South Tottenham, and as yet very



Photos: Network Rail

few masts have the fittings from which the overhead wires are suspended. Then there is around 70 miles of various cables to be hung from the mast fittings.

Once the cables are energised and tested, electric trains will be able to start using the line.

Network Rail predict the new passenger trains could enter service around Easter.



Photos: Vivarail

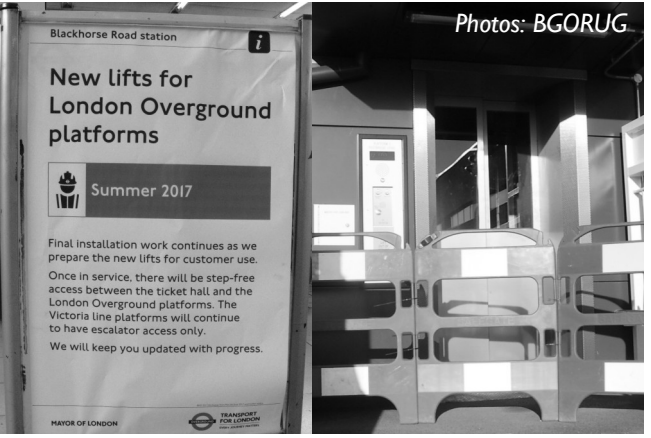
AN EXCELLENT PIXC-BUSTER!

Vivarail's D-Train (converted ex District Line stock) would make an excellent stop-gap PIXC-buster train should the introduction into service of electric trains be delayed. Vivarail have confirmed to BGORUG that it would have two diesel and one battery powered train (80 miles range) available in the new year. This would boost Class 172 availability, which is now declining.

- PIXC-buster diagram**
- 06:53SX Barking to South Tottenham
 - 07:59SX Woodgrange Park to Willesden Junction
 - 17:19SX South Tottenham to Gospel Oak
 - 17:35 Gospel Oak to Barking
 - 18:58SX Barking to Upper Holloway

BLACKHORSE ROAD LIFTS DELAY

Network Rail promised these lifts would be in service from 14th April, but they are still not in use. It was discovered late on that Network Rail's standard passenger alarm system was different from that used by London Underground and the lifts could not 'talk to' the Underground station control room. Engineers are working on the problem.



Photos: BGORUG

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:

*Delete as appropriate

THE CLOCK IS TICKING.....

FIRST NEW ELECTRIC TRAIN IS DUE IN DECEMBER

At least one and possibly up to three of the new 4-carriage Class 710/2 electric trains will be delivered to London Overground in December.

Network Rail has been rather vague about when the new overhead line infrastructure will be available for use by electric trains. It looks as if no Class 710/2 trains will be able to run on the Barking —

Gospel Oak line until February at the earliest and Network Rail has referred to them being introduced into service in the *spring*.

The 14 Class 710/2s are dual-voltage trains, able to run on 25kv AC overhead electrification or 750v DC third rail. This is because they will be allocated to London Overground's Willesden Depot for use on both the Barking — Gospel Oak and Euston —

Watford Jn 3rd rail services.

Due to the delay in Network Rail completing the electrification of the Barking — Gospel Oak line, it is now quite likely that the Class 710/2s will enter service on the Euston — Watford Junction service first.

The 5-car Class 378 trains currently on the Watford service will move to the North and East London Lines to increase service frequencies there.



Photos: Transport for London

Work to construct the 45 4-car Class 710 *Aventra* trains for London Overground is under way at the Derby works of Bombardier. They are similar in appearance to the trains now being

delivered for the new Elizabeth Line (Crossrail).

The Barking — Gospel Oak service was supposed to receive the first 8 of these trains, the next 6 going to the Euston — Watford Junction Local service and then 30 taking over the

Liverpool Street to Cheshunt via Seven Sisters, Chingford and Enfield Town services. The final unit will go to the Romford — Upminster Line. TfL has options to increase the size of the Class 710 order for Barking Riverside and timetable improvements.

DIESEL FLEET RELIABILITY DOWN

Our service is maintained by a fleet of 8 Bombardier Class 172 *Turbostar* Diesel Multiple Units (DMUs), now approaching their 7th birthday.

Since train services restarted on 27th February, reliability has failed to return to the levels of a year ago. While there have been some Network Rail infrastructure failures, most delays and cancellations have been due to the DMU fleet itself.

While hot weather does not help, the most regular and irritating faults are with the trains' external CCTV system, retro-fitted in 2014 to allow the trains to operate without a guard. If this system fails, the train has to be taken out of service.



Photo BGORUG

Class leader 172 001 failed at Wanstead Park while working the 13:35 from Gospel Oak on 23rd March 2017. The platform information screen & clock was also broken!

Excellent reliability from this small fleet is essential due to the high passenger loadings. The cancellation of the PIXC-buster diagram (Passengers In eXcess of Capacity) can mean passengers being unable to board a train for up to 45 minutes in the peak.

Electric trains last longer and are far more reliable as well as being greener, and the new 4-car Class 710s will accommodate many more passengers than our overworked 2-car Class 172s. It is therefore very worrying that the arrival of the Class 710s may be delayed by Network Rail's failure to complete electrification in time. In the meantime we really need an additional DMU to improve journey reliability for our passengers. *See overleaf*

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM or download form from www.barking-gospelok.org.uk
I wish to become a member of the Barking—Gospel Oak Rail User Group and agree to abide by the rules and constitution of the Group

Name: MR / MRS / MS*

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone Home / Work*:

Mobile:

* Delete as appropriate

Continued overleaf