

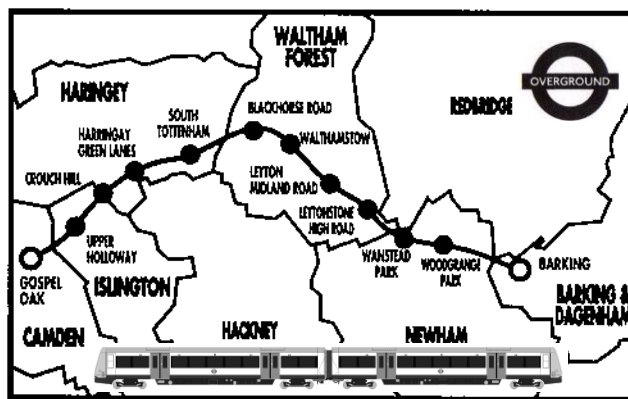
# BARKING – GOSPEL OAK RAIL USER GROUP

FOUNDED 1964

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Photography © G. Wallis/BGORUG



## NEWS RELEASE

30<sup>th</sup> May 2018



# TRAIN BOSS GUARANTEES *GHOST TRAINS!*

**Five trains are missing from new Overground timetable, but TfL says they will continue to run until new four-coach trains arrive in autumn**

Users of London Overground’s Barking – Gospel Oak line waited for their new summer timetable until less than two days before it started on Sunday 20<sup>th</sup> May<sup>[1]</sup>. Members of the Barking – Gospel Oak Rail User Group (BGORUG)<sup>[2]</sup> had to leaflet passengers on one train to let them know it would be running 15 minutes later the next time it ran!

When Transport for London (TfL)<sup>[3]</sup> finally published the timetable late on Friday 18<sup>th</sup> May, BGORUG was dismayed to see that five trains, including the one above, were missing.

Said BGORUG Secretary, Glenn Wallis, “While the five trains were loaded into Network Rail’s timetable for the following week, their absence from the public timetable meant that TfL could withdraw them at any time with no notice, and at least three of these trains were vital commuter trains introduced to try and control overcrowding”.

“These trains go back to 2013 and were called *PIXC-busters*<sup>[4]</sup>. Now they are *ghost trains!*”





## TRAIN BOSS GUARANTEES GHOST TRAINS!

“These 2-carriage diesel trains should have been replaced by now,” said Glenn Wallis, “But their new 4-coach electric replacements are already five months late<sup>[5]</sup> and the diesels are due to move to the West Midlands area<sup>[6]</sup> in time for the December timetable change”.

BGORUG was concerned that one of the eight 2-carriage diesel trains that maintain the Barking – Gospel Oak service was about to be transferred to another train company, ending the operation of these five *PIXC-buster/ghost trains*<sup>[7]</sup> and causing unmanageable peak time overcrowding.

“It is likely that the leasing company would want to take one of the diesel units back early to agree with new operator, West Midlands Railway, any work it required before taking delivery in the late autumn. The loss of one of these units would put an end to these five *ghost trains*.”

The user group has pressed TfL for a guarantee that no diesel train will be released before its electric replacement had been delivered and was in service on the line. A TfL spokesperson wrote in reply:

“Jonathan Fox, our Director of Rail has said “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”.

“We are grateful to Jonathan Fox for giving passengers this important assurance”, said Glenn Wallis. “We appreciate that this situation is not of TfL’s making, but any reduction in service before the new electric trains arrive is just unthinkable.”



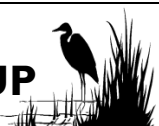
Morning peak at Barking 12/03/2018 [@janecell JaneH]



07:59 SSuX Woodgrange Park to Willesden Junction Low Level calls at Blackhorse Road on 15/02/2018 [@CMPD CJ]

- ENDS -

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT  
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## TRAIN BOSS GUARANTEES GHOST TRAINS!

### NOTES FOR EDITORS

1. See <https://tinyurl.com/y7kxf9mq>
2. Formed in 1964 as the Barking – Kentish Town Line Committee to fight the infamous Dr. Beeching's proposed closure of the line, 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, now finally approved by the Government on 26 June 2013. It is hoped that electric passenger trains will have commenced operation by the end of 2018.
3. The transfer of responsibility for the former *Silverlink Metro* services from the Department for Transport (DfT) to Transport for London (TfL) in 2006, led to creation of the *London Overground* network on 11<sup>th</sup> November 2007. Operation of the *London Rail Concession* is currently carried out by Arriva Rail London for TfL.
4. See <https://tinyurl.com/yaqfwbs9>
5. 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 7<sup>th</sup> 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).

The delivery of the fleet to London Overground has been held up due to the delay in getting Network Rail (NR) *type approval* which would allow the trains to run on NR tracks. The first new Class 710 train, 710256 was delivered to the NR testing facility at Asfordby in Leicestershire just before Christmas 2017. The centre was already testing new automatic cab signalling equipment on London Underground S7/8 trains and type testing Class 345 *Aventra* trains for the Elizabeth Line and Class 800 series Inter City Express Programme trains. This meant that Class 710 testing got off to a slow start.

As Class 345 is the first *Aventra* type to be built, while many tests will be generic to Class 710, Class 345 has much more sophisticated signalling equipment for operating over several different types of NR signalled tracks, the Elizabeth Line tunnel and the Heathrow tunnel. The urgent need for the Class 345s to be ready for the Elizabeth Line opening this December means that testing the numerous software upgrades required as testing continues has priority over testing the Class 710.

It is now hoped that Class 710 will receive type approval soon, allowing deliveries to London Overground to start, in turn allowing NR route approvals to be obtained and driver training to start with a view to the trains entering service in the autumn of this year.



710256 on test at NR's Leicestershire test track on 15/02/2018 [Carl Westwood]



710256 stabled at NR's Asfordby test centre on 26/04/2018 [@RiggerMortiss]





## TRAIN BOSS GUARANTEES GHOST TRAINS!



Stored Class 710 vehicles at Derby Litchurch Lane Works 13/02/2018 [DPE Rail]



Interior of Class 710 will resemble this Class 345, but Class 710 will have no transverse seats [ARS technica]

6. Contracts have been signed for the eight 2-car Bombardier Class 172 diesel trains that have provided the Barking – Gospel Oak service since 2010 to move to the West Midlands Coventry – Nuneaton service for the start of the December 2018 timetable.

7.

WESTBOUND Mondays to Fridays commencing 21 <sup>st</sup> May 2018 until further notice					
Train ID		2J95	2J96	2J40	2J42
Barking	d.	06:53	08:11		18:58
Woodgrange Park	d.	06:57	08:14		19:01
Wanstead Park	d.	07:00	08:17		19:04
Leytonstone High Road	d.	07:04	08:21		19:08
Leyton Midland Road	d.	07:07	08:23		19:10
Walthamstow Queen's Road	d.	07:11	08:26		09:13
Blackhorse Road	d.	07:14	08:29		19:16
South Tottenham	d.	07a21	08:33	17:19	19:20
Harringay Green Lanes	d.		08:36	17:21	19:23
Crouch Hill	d.		08:39	17:24	19:26
Upper Holloway	d.		08:42	17:26	19a31
Gospel Oak	a.		↓	17:34	
Hampstead Heath	d.		08:49		
Finchley Road & Frognal	d.		08:51		
West Hampstead	d.		08:53		
Brondesbury	d.		08:55		
Brondesbury Park	d.		08:56		
Kensal Rise	d.		08:58		
Willesden Junction Low Level	a.		09:09		

EASTBOUND Mondays to Fridays From 21 <sup>st</sup> May until further notice	
Train ID	2J91
Gospel Oak	d. 17:28
Upper Holloway	d. 17:32
Crouch Hill	d. 17:34
Harringay Green Lanes	d. 17:37
South Tottenham	d. 17:41
Blackhorse Road	d. 17:45
Walthamstow Queen's Road	d. 17:47
Leyton Midland Road	d. 17:50
Leytonstone High Road	d. 17:52
Wanstead Park	d. 17:54
Woodgrange Park	d. 17:57
Barking	a. 18:05

