

November News Update

More Timetable Improvements In Store!

More good news for this December's timetable change! The 20-minute Mon-Fri peak-hour frequency will start earlier and finish later – roughly 07 00 till 10 30, and 15 30 till 20 00 (trains will run half-hourly at other times). It will also be evened-out to give a more regular 20-minute frequency, and a new 22 38 from Barking will fill the last remaining one-hour gap in the Mon-Fri service. Sadly, the same will not be done for the one-hour gaps on Saturday & Sunday evenings, and we've asked Silverlink to try and rectify this in May 2007 – also to see if the Sunday service can start earlier and finish later.

Looking ahead, Transport for London have put in a bid to run a 20-minute service all day Monday-Saturday from December 2007. The Sunday service would remain half-hourly, but would finish later. In addition, they and Network Rail have submitted a bid for Transport Innovation Fund money to the Dept for Transport, to increase our line's gauge for freight wagons and also install additional signals to allow a more intensive service to operate. This is the key to getting the 15-minute service that both we and TfL want to see.

Train Performance & Reliability

Like us, Silverlink have not been happy at recent train performance and cancellations, and have decided to move maintenance of our line's trains back from Willesden depot to Bletchley. We expressed concern that this might cause delays if a train broke down and a replacement had to be summoned, but they assured us that a "hot spare" will be kept at Willesden for this purpose. Hopefully this should result in an improvement in reliability. They are also looking at basing our trains more locally again in the future, possibly at East Ham. Silverlink also have plans to improve the fare collection on the line, and we wish the new management team luck on that. Successive managers over many years have pledged to get this sorted, but none of them has ever managed to crack it.

Station to Station

We are delighted that Silverlink have reinstated the post of a dedicated Stations Manager for our line, and to welcome Steve Mackay back in that role. Steve had the job until it was misguidedly cut a year or two ago, and we are pleased to have him back on the patch. We have compiled a list of outstanding issues on each station (some of them very long-standing) and look forward to getting some results in the coming weeks. One major issue over the last year has been the maintenance of station lighting; this has been appalling, with some faults going unrepaired for weeks or even months despite frequent complaints. There has been a marked improvement in this over the last few weeks; with winter nights upon us, this must be maintained.

Major Change to Fares Structure

From January, National Rail fares in London will be brought under the same zonal fare structure as that used by the Underground. As most of our line lies within Zone 3, that should hopefully mean that a number of fares will come down. (Those which are actually collected in the first place, that is.....). We shall try and get some examples in time for the next News Update.

Diary Dates

Meet the Managers session – Barking Station, **Wed 8th November**, 16 00 till 19 00. Your chance to raise any issues face-to-face with the rail managers responsible!

Family Fun Day at Waltham Forest FC, including match v Arsenal Legends XI – **Sun 12th Nov, 14 00** onwards. Wadham Lodge, Kitchener Road E17 – train to Leyton Midland Road then 97 bus. Details –www.walthamforest-fc.co.uk

Public Meeting on what should be done with the still-vacant Central Walthamstow Arcade site – **Wed 15th November**, 19 30 at Harmony Hall, Truro Road E17 (just off the High Street). Nearest station Walthamstow Queens Road – exit straight ahead up Exmouth Road and follow the signs for the shopping area/market.