

BARKING-GOSPEL OAK LINE USER GROUP

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SPRING 2009 NEWS UPDATE

2ND JUNE MEETING

We regret that the above meeting will not now take place.

The date of the next open meeting will be circulated and put on the website when known but will probably be in the early autumn.

2009 MEMBERSHIP RENEWALS

Those members who have not renewed have been deleted from our list. If you have forgotten to renew please do so now to ensure that you continue to receive newsletters and details of members meetings.

REPLACEMENT BUSES – EVENTUALLY GETTING THERE!

The uproar caused by LOROL's admission at our February meeting that they had restarted the replacement bus service on an hourly frequency caused a rapid rethink, common sense prevailed and the service was restored to half-hourly after a couple of weeks. BGOLUG's constant complaints about bus and bus stop signage, publicity and information have brought gradual improvements and at the time of writing are just about acceptable. North London Line passengers are similarly benefiting from improved replacement bus information. It is worrying that LOROL & TfL London Rail needed so much convincing that providing passengers with timetables and marked bus stops was the right approach.

WAITING FOR THE TRAIN

The problems at Bombardier's Derby works with component supply, reported previously, have not eased and priority continues to be given to completing *Electostar* trains for Thameslink services and LOROL. LOROL and TfL Rail have ceased to quote introduction dates but it is now generally accepted that the first new *Turbostar* diesel train is unlikely to be seen on the Barking-Gospel Oak Line until well into 2010.

THE CRUSH GOES ON AND ON AND ON!

TfL London Rail had promised a Monday-Saturday 15-minute frequency service from September 2009 with LOROL borrowing a *Networker Turbo* train from sister company Chiltern Railways if the new *Turbostars* had not been delivered in time. It is now clear that due to six months of procrastination by Network Rail, the new signalling required to allow the more frequent service to operate will not be ready until at least November and possibly later! From Christmas 2009 until May 2010, the North London Line will be closed for rebuilding between Stratford and Gospel Oak, causing all that line's freight trains to be diverted between Woodgrange Park and Gospel Oak. It is understood that the improved Overground train frequency will not now start until May 2010!

EVERYBODY WANTS IT BUT NOBODY WANTS TO PAY!

Network Rail recently published its Electrification Route Utilisation Strategy which gives a high priority to getting the wires up and plugging the electrification gap between Woodgrange Park and Gospel Oak. Last year major freight operator EWS (now DB Schenker) gave equal priority to the route as did a TfL London Rail report into rail freight the year before that. Network Rail's Iain Coucher has told our Secretary that it's not up to them to pay and TfL Rail plays down the importance of electrification for passengers on the route because it does not want to pick up the full tab either!