

FROM THE PAPERS

Items for “From the Papers” should be sent to Ian McKenzie at 24 Thamespoint, Fairways, Teddington, TW11 9PP, and not to the Editor of this journal. Please ensure that contributions are identified by date and source publication.

05.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – A couple, Amy Walker and Mark Longstaff-Tyrrell, have invented a range of smart wallets to stop card clash – and cut queuing times at Underground barriers. Up to 2,000 commuters per day have the wrong card charged by readers, which accepts signals from contactless debit or credit cards, as well as Oyster cards. Although wallets which block all signals from cards inside exist, the *Merlo* wallet is made from a material that allows only the Oyster signal through. The creators said the range can also thwart attempts by thieves to steal card information using handheld contactless readers. The leather slim-line wallets cost from £38. Ms. Walker said: “I got caught by card clash at the Underground barrier at Waterloo after I kept my Travelcard and contactless debit card together. Either I end up charging the journey to the wrong card, or the gate wouldn’t open at all. I wanted to fly through the barriers but the card often jammed and other commuters were getting impatient as they wanted to get to work”.

06.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – Mayoral candidate Zac Goldsmith has announced plans for 500 BT police officers – paid for in part by scrapping free travel perks for friends and family of TfL staff. He said extra police officers would deter criminals and reassure the public. The plan – costing £25M a year – would be funded primarily by reviewing TfL’s “friends and family” nominee passes. All TfL staff would still get free travel on buses, Underground and DLR. However they currently also receive a free Zones 1-6 Travelcard, worth £2,364 a year, for one other person at their home address.

07.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – The survey of 1,000 Underground users was conducted for Channel 5 to find the most annoying habits on the Underground. The results were:

1. Barging onto a train without letting others off first.
2. Refusing to move down the carriage, blocking others from boarding.
3. Rubbish left on seats.
4. People eating noisily, particularly when it is smelly food.
5. “*Manspreading*” – when passengers, usually male, sit with their legs wide apart to take up space in adjoining seats.
6. People refusing to give up their seat to the pregnant or elderly.
7. Passengers playing loud music.
8. Passengers standing on the left of escalators.
9. People wearing large rucksacks during the rush-hour.
10. People insisting on broadcasting loud and inappropriate conversations.

07.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – Mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan has pledged to review TfL’s plans for a £1B Crossrail 2 station in Chelsea, if elected. The planned King’s Road station is opposed by some residents, who have campaigned for it to be sited at Imperial Wharf instead. Mr. Khan said: “It is absolutely crucial that TfL takes residents’ views into account, as well as ensuring the scheme is value for money for the taxpayer”.

08.04.16 METRO – Passengers on the Victoria Line can enjoy some musical accompaniment to their journeys this weekend, as a series of Art on the Underground live performances continues. Karen Jones from London Sinfonietta will perform a specially commissioned piece, *Displaced Duet for Flute*, by composer Matt Rogers at Stockwell station. She will accompany a recording of herself.

10.04.16 THE GUARDIAN – *By Damian Carrington* – 85 sites on the Underground are at a high and rising risk of flooding, according to a report that says it is “only a matter of time” before serious flooding strikes. Most threatened are some of the capital’s busiest stations, including Waterloo, King’s Cross and London Bridge, and the report warns of potential dangers to passengers. The report was funded after Hurricane *Sandy* swamped the metro in New York City in 2012. As well as the risk to passengers, closures and delays result in multimillion-pound losses for the Underground and the wider economy. The report finds the risk of flooding is rising due to climate change, and its findings reflect wider concerns about the UK’s preparedness for the impacts of global warming. A senior LU drainage engineer said: “You can’t get an asset more vulnerable to flooding than a network of underground tunnels”. The unpublished flood risk review, produced by LU, says: “London has been fortunate to escape the worst of recent storm events in the UK, but it is only a matter of time before heavy rainfall seriously affects London and the Underground network”. The report is its first since 2001 and identifies

85 “high risk” sites, of which 57 are stations; the rest are shafts and tunnel entrances. The top 10 of highest risk include Finsbury Park, Notting Hill Gate, Seven Sisters, Colliers Wood, Stockwell and Marble Arch. Another 68 sites were identified as at “significant risk”, including 23 stations. The biggest risks are from flash flooding after heavy downpours and from burst water mains. LU has requested £3M over the next three years to analyse the riskiest sites in greater detail and to begin to install protective measures. Much more funding will ultimately be needed, as “£3M is not going to scratch the surface”, according to LU. TfL is understood to be receptive to the plan, but approval will depend on the Mayor who will be elected in May.

12.04.16 THE GUARDIAN – *By Gwyn Topham* – Commuters have been promised a faster, easier journey on Crossrail, but may find their progress slowed considerably by a lengthy walk to connect to Underground services. Commuters needing to change from Crossrail on to the Underground or other services could find time savings eroded by distances they need to cover within stations. Lord Andrew Adonis, chairman of the National Infrastructure Commission (NIC), says: “The interchanges are not great. There are going to be a lot of passengers walking a long way to change between trains – and they are very long trains”. Lord Adonis compared the Crossrail interchanges unfavourably with other additions to London’s transport network, especially with the Victoria Line, constructed in the 1960s and has cross-platform connections with the Northern and Bakerloo lines at Euston and Oxford Circus, respectively. He declined to say where he believed the biggest problems were, although he had intervened in the plans for the Bond Street hub that was originally designed as a separate Crossrail station from the Underground stations, which serves the Central and Jubilee lines. TfL’s Howard Smith said: “We are investing millions of pounds upgrading existing stations along the route, including Paddington, Liverpool Street and Tottenham Court Road, to make it easy as possible for our customers to interchange with our existing services”. TfL acknowledged that Crossrail interchanges were not ideal, but said constraints such as sewers and existing lines had limited the construction of tunnels, and that alternatives would have been more expensive. The interchanges for planned Crossrail 2 should be more successful, with Adonis having championed the next cross-London line as a scheme of national importance since being appointed head of the NIC.

12.04.16 THE TIMES – *By Columnist Ann Treneman* – “Thanks to my American accent, I often feel that I am being lumped together with a bunch of people who wear Bermuda shorts and vote for Donald Trump. So there I was, on the Underground going home, deep in thought about identity, when suddenly I noticed that we weren’t moving. A policeman poked his head into the carriage. “Has anyone seen a man with no trousers wearing a puffer jacket?”. A man across from me offered: “Yes, but he had boxer shorts on. He went that way”. We all watched as a posse of police rushed this way and that, à la Marx Brothers, in search of a man without trousers. It was all deeply comical but I’m quite sure that no one in the carriage would have cared if a man in boxer shorts had sat next to them (as long as his earphones didn’t leak!). In America they would mind. It’s just one of the many small things that make me realise that, after more than 30 years here, I am more British than anything else”.

13.04.16 METRO – *Actimel* has launched a sponsorship campaign with TfL at five major Underground stations, which will generate £225K to reinvest in the transport network. The campaign kicked off earlier this week with a live performance by the *Stay Strong Brothers* at Tottenham Court Road. Commuters will be given free samples of *Actimel* products and vouchers. Over the past few years TfL has taken a new approach to commercial partnerships, which has led to sponsorship deals worth millions of pounds with major brands including *Santander*, *ITV* and *Not on the High Street*. These partnerships are part of TfL’s wider commercial strategy to generate £3.4B in non-fare revenue over 10 years, all of which will be spent on running and modernising the transport network.

13.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – The numbers of places on LT Museum tours of disused Underground stations has been trebled after soaring demand. About 17,000 tickets will go on sale next Wednesday, allowing access to Down Street, the Piccadilly Line station used by the Cabinet during WW2 – it was dubbed “Winston Churchill’s “secret station”. Tours cost £75 will include tea from the nearby 5-star Athenaeum Hotel. Last year TfL began inviting bids to bring Down Street back to life as an art gallery or restaurant. There will be new £27.50 tours of 55 Broadway and tours of the “labyrinth of dark deserted passageways” under Euston Station.

13.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – More than 400 Underground engineers are to be balloted for strike action over the multi-billion-pound Earl’s Court development. The RMT says jobs are threatened by a “mad dash” by the Mayor and TfL to sell parts of the engineers’ Lillie Bridge Depot for housing and move them to Acton. A strike by engineers could halt services.

14.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – Mayoral candidate Sadiq Khan has vowed to put London on a “war footing” to deal with terrorist threats and warned Underground chiefs against slashing the live monitoring of security cameras. The root-and-branch rethink would call together Scotland Yard, transport chiefs, the River Thames authorities and the emergency services to re-plan how to respond to a major Paris-style attack. Mr. Khan said he was “seriously concerned” to have been informed that CCTV cameras on the Underground were no longer being automatically monitored “in real time”. TfL confirmed that it had changed camera monitoring as part of its modernisation programme, but stressed that security and safety were its first concern. According to Mr Khan’s sources, until 3 April this year, there were 243 control room staff on the Underground dedicated to monitoring banks of video screens. Now, only stations in Zone 1 have kept mandatory monitoring, but this can be stopped “at the discretion of local management”. Outside Zone 1, full-time monitoring is no longer mandatory.

15.04.16 METRO – *Arriva Rail London* has signed a £1.5B contract to become the new Overground operator. The agreement will cover 7½ years with an option to extend for up to two additional years. *Arriva* will take over from existing operator LOROL in November and will support TfL in delivering further improvements on the already popular network. These will include modernised stations and more frequent services. New trains will be introduced in 2018, transforming journeys out of Liverpool Street and on the Gospel Oak to Barking line.

15.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – Residents are lobbying for an upgrade to a 19th century Underground station where rush-hour overcrowding is so bad that people queue on the street to get in. Locals are calling on TfL to modernise West Hampstead station, opened in 1879, to accommodate the growing numbers of residents living in surrounding developments, and have worked with a local architect to produce design plans. Pressure is exacerbated by commuters changing there for the nearby Overground and Thameslink stations. Proposed features for the Jubilee Line station include lifts, wheelchair accessibility, double width barriers, large ticket hall, wider stairs and better-connected platforms. TfL said it welcomed the forum’s suggestions.

16.04.16 WESTERN MORNING NEWS – The man who voiced “Please Mind the Gap” and “Stand Clear of the Doors” announcements on the Underground has died. Voice-over artist Phil Sayer, 62, who had worked for the BBC as a regional TV and radio presenter, died on Thursday. Mr. Sayer, dubbed the “voice of reason, radio and railways”, announced the warning phrases for multiple Underground lines and announcements at railway stations across the country.

16.04.16 THE TIMES – A 70-year-old woman was “sent flying down an escalator” after being hit by a young woman sliding down the central barrier in North Greenwich station during the early-morning rush hour. The pensioner was taken to hospital for injuries to her arm, BTP said. A witness said she was “sent flying to her knees” and was “badly hurt” as a result of the impact. BTP said its officers would be speaking to the younger woman in connection with the incident. TfL said: “Pranks like this are dangerous for not only those involved but also to other customers”.

18.04.16 METRO – A special edition Tube Map has been created in partnership with Shakespeare’s Globe and TfL to commemorate the 400th anniversary of The Bard’s death. Each line has been given a specific subject, with stations names changed to relate to the line’s theme. Icons have been added to help distinguish the plays by genre and highlight the characters who disguised themselves as male or female.

19.04.16 METRO – A cancer survivor has produced badges in the style of “Baby on Board” for sufferers to wear in public transport. Londoner, James McNaught, who had a tumour the size of a golf ball on one of his tonsils, travelled across the city for radiotherapy. He lost the ability to speak during the treatment and often appeared drunk as he was on morphine. He is in talks with TfL over making travel easier for everyone with illnesses and disabilities that are not obvious.

19.04.16 EVENING STANDARD – Travelling on the Underground typically takes about four times longer for passengers who use a wheelchair, a new report revealed today. A lack of step-free access to the network means that the journey from Paddington to Oxford Circus takes 30 minutes, compared with the seven minutes for able-bodied passengers on the Bakerloo Line. The journey on the Jubilee Line from Baker Street to Bond Street takes two minutes, but 33 minutes for disabled people because Bond Street does not have lifts from the platform to street. One campaigner said: “It is devastating that young disabled people like me are being held back in life by limited transport options. Living in London I’m better served than most, but I still face daily battles. I’ve constantly struggled to get to work

opportunities and miss out on socialising – parts of London are “no-go” zones for me. We must push for full inclusion – no one should be excluded”.

20.04.16 CITY AM – TfL announcement yesterday named Australian Mark Wild as the MD of the Underground. Mr. Wild is currently special adviser to the State Government of Victoria. He was also CEO of Public Transport Victoria. He has worked on a number of major LU projects in London, including the introduction of modern signalling on the Jubilee and Victoria lines.

21.04.16 METRO – To celebrate the Queen’s 90th Birthday, her various visits to the Underground network were listed: 1939, she travelled with her sister on the District Line from St. James’s Park; 1969, she opened the Victoria Line by ‘driving’ a train between Green Park and Oxford Circus; 1977, she unveiled the Piccadilly Line extension to Heathrow Airport; 2010, she was shown the memorial plaque honouring those killed in 2005 London bombings. She was also presented with a “Buckingham Palace” Underground sign; 2013, as part of the LU150, she visited Baker Street; 2016, she visited Bond Street station for the naming of the Crossrail route as the Elizabeth Line.
