

THE NIGHT TUBE COMMETH (EVENTUALLY, BUT FOR JUST TWO AT THE MOMENT)

After a lot of uncertainty about it, opposition to it and strikes because of it, the “Night Tube” came into partial operation with two new timetables (the originals were dated 6 September 2015) effective from Sunday 7 August 2016. However, the first weekend of Friday/Saturday 12/13 and Saturday/Sunday 13/14 August saw the Night Tube service running on a trial (and empty) basis¹ with the actual weekend night services beginning on Friday night 19 August 2016. For the time being, this is limited to the Victoria Line and sections of the Central Line.

The ‘Free the Night’ marketing campaign features a ‘running man’, reusing the design created last year when Night Tube should have been introduced. The fares campaign uses features from Becky the Owl, the Night Tube owl which is used on Night Tube maps.

The Jubilee and parts of the Northern and Piccadilly lines are expected to follow suit sometime after, subject to an on-going dispute with engineering staff on those three lines (the JNP group) being resolved, although no start date was forthcoming as this issue closed for press.

Readers following timetable changes will note that the original Night Tube WTT numbers have not been used and for some lines, there will be a gap in the timetable listings. For the Central Line, WTT No.68 wasn’t introduced back in September 2015 and its several new features from it were had to wait to be incorporated in new WTT No.69. For the Victoria Line WTT No.38 wasn’t introduced but the daytime improvements featured in it were incorporated in WTT No.39 in May 2016. Therefore, the new Night Tube WTT No.40 has hardly any daytime changes.

In recent years, LU Working Timetables have had the Monday to Friday pages printed on white paper, Saturdays on green and Sundays on yellow, which was adopted by the Metropolitan many years before other lines. The new Night Tube timetables now have a separate ‘Fridays’ page, and these are printed on pale peach paper.

On both Friday and Saturday nights, along with Saturday and Sunday mornings, the transition between the late evening and night service and between the night and Sunday morning services respectively, is relatively swift – i.e. no gradual wind-down at night or gradual increase in the morning. Because trains are not allowed to run continuously in service from Friday morning right through to Sunday night (which would technically be possible), trains are changed over during each night and in a few instances, during the day on Saturdays to meet strict maintenance checks.

It goes without saying that where short workings are scheduled at the end of traffic during the week, these turn into through services on Night Tube on Friday and Saturday nights, and similarly on Saturday and Sunday mornings, where there are short working start-ups during the week, these may be through services from the other end of the line.

Quite when other sections of the ‘tube’ lines may follow is currently unknown, with the Sub-Surface Lines having to wait until after the SSR resignalling process is complete.

THE TIMETABLE START

Because the new timetables were dated to start on Sunday 7 August 2016, and because the new Sunday service is a continuation of the Saturday all-night service, the service on that day had to include the old Sunday start up. For that purpose, two ‘Transition’ Timetable Notices (TTNs) were issued to cater for that – effectively the TTNs were a copy of the hitherto normal Sunday service. For the record, these were TTN 129/16 for the Central Line and TTN 127/16 for the Victoria Line.

VICTORIA LINE No.40

Because improvements to the Victoria Line service were made from 15 May 2016 in Working Timetable No.39 (see *Underground News* No.654, June 2016), there are no notable changes to the daytime services in this timetable, other than with the ‘rusty rail’ workings at Victoria sidings and King’s Cross siding. These have been re-scheduled to take place early on Saturday and Sunday mornings. Excluding the Victoria sidings starts and stablers, these ‘rusty rail’ moves now take place as follows:

¹ For the ‘trial’, special Timetable Notices were issued (TTN 124/16 for the Central Line and TTN 128/16 for the Victoria Line). This ensured last trains ran as scheduled and then continued running, shown as empty (after detrainment if at an intermediate reversing point) until entraining at the start of traffic. This also ensured that no confusion existed between last trains and empty working all-night trains.

Saturdays – 04.31 Seven Sisters – Victoria, 05.00 Victoria – King’s Cross.
 Sundays – 06.01 Seven Sisters – Victoria, 06.30 Victoria – King’s Cross.

On both mornings, the trains from King’s Cross siding then run to Brixton to work the main day’s service. And quite simply, eight trains are in service during the night, providing a 10-minute service between Brixton and Walthamstow Central, during which time there are no Seven Sisters reversers or depot staff trains.

CENTRAL LINE No.69

The Central Line has had significant changes made affecting Mondays to Fridays (as well as Night Tube, of course), which should have taken place in WTT No.68 of September 2015.

As no new Central Line timetable has been introduced in the intervening period, WTT No.67 has remained in operation (with subsequent minor changes because of rolling stock problems). It will be recalled that in January 2015 the morning peak service was reduced from 79 to 78 trains because of the continuing problems with the 1992 Tube Stock and the service alterations provided for one ‘all-round’ (the Hainault loop) train in each direction (see *Underground News*, March 2015, page 152). This has now been abolished with the timetable revision and the service in the evening peak has also been reduced from 79 to 78 trains.

In consequence, changes have been made to the early-morning service on the Hainault loop on the inner rail, there are more Loughton reversers in the peaks at the expense of Debden reversers and there is a reduction in the morning peak trains that start from Grange Hill and go westbound from Woodford. The noteworthy features are:

- Earlier first trains from Grange Hill – 05.26 and 05.40 (both to Leytonstone) and 05.48 (to Woodford). Hitherto the first train was 06.06 to Woodford (which was also the first inner rail train from Hainault at 06.04, and still is).
- Trains from Grange Hill to the main westbound service are now at 06.53 (to West Ruislip), 07.16 (to North Acton) and 08.03 (to West Ruislip). There were previously seven trains at 06.30, 06.53, 07.16, 07.38, 07.54, 08.03 and 08.21.
- One additional departure from Epping in the early morning just before 06.30 breaks up a previous extended gap westbound around that time.
- The single afternoon start-up from Hainault depot to Grange Hill and thence westbound from Woodford has been changed to depart Grange Hill at 16.05 (to White City) instead of at 16.42 (to Northolt).
- Revised Epping branch in both peaks:

	Is	Was
Departures from Epping 07.00 to 09.00	21	21
Debden reversers morning peak	3	5
Loughton departures morning peak 07.00 to 10.00	7	3
Arrivals at Epping evening peak 17.00 to 19.00	21	20
Debden reversers evening peak	7	9
Loughton reversers evening peak 16.00 to 19.00	7	4

- The early-evening direct train to Grange Hill (arrive 17.50) via Woodford is unchanged, ex-West Ruislip at 16.32.
- For Night Tube, train numbering has been revised Friday to Sunday with the introduction of 2xx and 3xx numbers to identify those trains which remain in service overnight and are changed over in the small hours.
- A total of 14 trains enable a 10-minute central area service (White City – Leytonstone) with 20 minute intervals to Ealing Broadway, Loughton and Hainault. Services are not self-contained, operating in turn Hainault – White City – Loughton – Ealing Broadway – Hainault.

The changes and improvements for Sundays between 11.00 and 21.00 planned for WTT No.68 in September 2015 have not been carried forward and implemented in this new timetable. Instead the existing Sunday service based on a 22-minute service pattern has been retained with 61 trains in service. This means that the service through the central area operates every 2¾ minutes instead of every 2½ minutes as proposed and as shown below, and that the Northolt reversers remain on Sundays but with no North Acton reversers in the main daytime ‘busy’ period.

EXISTING SUNDAY DAYTIME 'BUSY' SERVICE

6-10	West Ruislip – Northolt
5½	Northolt – North Acton
5½-11	Ealing Broadway – North Acton
2¾-5½	North Acton – White City
2¾	White City – Leytonstone
5½	Leytonstone – Newbury Park
5½-11	Newbury Park – Hainault
22	Hainault – Woodford
5½	Leytonstone - Loughton
5½-11	Loughton - Epping
61	Total trains

INTERVALS PROPOSED IN WTT 68

5-10	West Ruislip – Northolt
5-10	Northolt – North Acton
5-10	Ealing Broadway – North Acton
2½-5	North Acton – White City
2½	White City – Leytonstone
5	Leytonstone – Newbury Park
5-10	Newbury Park – Hainault
20	Hainault – Woodford
5	Leytonstone - Loughton
5-10	Loughton – Epping
65	Total trains

As this issue was being closed for press, it was announced that Night Tube will launch on the Jubilee Line on Friday night 7 October 2016. This will be following operational trials during the night of 30 September and 1 October – the weekend before all-night passenger services begin. More details in a future issue – and still no start date yet for Night Tube on the Northern and Piccadilly lines.