

# FROM THE PAPERS

Items for "From the Papers" should be sent to Ian McKenzie at 24 Thamespoint, Fairways, Teddington, TW11 9PP (or E-Mail [secretary@lurs.org.uk](mailto:secretary@lurs.org.uk)), and not to the Editor of this journal. Please ensure that contributions are identified by date and source publication.

**23.01.17 EVENING STANDARD** – *Post by Peter Lyons* – "Can TfL explain why passengers have to endure freezing temperatures on the Northern Line? I travelled in from High Barnet at 06.00 on 20 January -4°C conditions with no heating. I bet the driver was nice and warm. What about us paying customers?"

**26.01.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Underground train drivers on the Waterloo & City Line today defied an RMT strike call and turned up for work. The line, known as "the Drain", connects Waterloo main line and Bank stations and is used by more than 32,000 commuters a day. A senior LU source said: "We didn't expect this". RMT ordered the strike on this line and the Central Line in protest over what it claims was the "forced" move of eight of its members to different train depots. (*See also Underground News, March 2017, page 255. Ed.*)

**27.01.17 WATFORD OBSERVER** – The Mayor of Watford says one company involved in the Metropolitan Line Extension has stopped working. Her PA said that the Mayor had found out through the "parliamentary grapevine" and said they do not know why it has stopped but confirmed that there were shortcomings in funding. She said that Affinity Water has stopped working on the sewer works to make way for the proposed viaduct that comprises part of the Extension. The Mayor said the design work is continuing and that Transport Secretary Chris Grayling has assured her the extension is a contractual obligation.

**27.01.17 EVENING STANDARD** – *Post by Sanjay Shabi* – "Once again, there was an Underground strike yesterday under Sadiq Khan's tenure, despite him expressing a zero-tolerance approach to such action. The last strike was supposedly based on Boris Johnson's legacy, so when does the Johnson legacy and Khan's start? I am sure Londoners take zero-tolerance view of such disruption but, like Khan, we are actually powerless to do anything about it".

**27.01.17 EVENING STANDARD** – *Post by Simon Baker* – "Considering how short the Waterloo & City line is, the fact that all drivers turned up for work didn't make much difference during the Underground strike. On the other hand, that the Central Line is out of action will have quite an impact on people who want to travel from one side of London to the other".

**30.01.17 EVENING STANDARD** – LU chiefs today made a fresh appeal to union leaders to return to the negotiating table to avert major strike disruption next week in the long-running dispute over staff cuts. The plea came after the RMT refused to attend talks at ACAS on Friday. Instead, the union announced walkouts affecting services over three days from Sunday, which will close huge sections of the network. LU said the threat of strike action was "completely unnecessary".

**31.01.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Crisis talks were taking place today to try to prevent three days of Underground strikes that threaten major disruption to Monday morning rush hour services. The RMT union has agreed to the new talks at ACAS, after LU bosses announced they were hiring an extra 125 staff in the long-running dispute over job cuts. RMT and TSSA leaders, representing nearly 4,000 station and ticket staff, are divided on the issue. The RMT said it was attending the talks but that planned strike action was still set to go ahead. The TSSA said that while it needed to "clarify" the proposals it would not be taking part in the strikes. The RMT has warned of strikes in March if an agreement is not reached. LU has previously said that it would hire 200 new staff this year. Today LU said: "We will be recruiting at least 650 new station staff this year, of which 325 will be additional new roles".

**01.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Mayor Sadiq Khan was accused of "giving in" to the unions by scaling back plans to reduce the number of Underground station staff. TfL said it would be hiring 325 new workers after talks with the RMT union in an effort to avert more strike action at the weekend. The long-running dispute is about the axing of up to 900 staff and closure of ticket offices under Mayor Boris Johnson's regime. It was claimed that he was ignoring the advice of his own independent review, by *TravelWatch*, into his predecessor's decision to close the offices which saved about £50M a year. It

was claimed that the Mayor was reappointing more staff “against the evidence – the reviewers did not call for them to re-opened – at a cost of £68M over his first term.

**01.02.17 – 14.02.17 RAIL** – This issue contains a four-page article about the railways on the Isle of Wight, under the title of “A tale of two railways”. It gives a brief introduction to the different routes that the Island once had, their post-war run-down and recalls the withdrawal of steam on 31 January 1966. (*Erroneously, it states that the railway then closed for a year from that date [for electrification], which it didn't – it reopened to electric services on 20 March 1967*). It then mentions the different types of ex-LU stock that operated on the line. (*Also incorrectly, it says that the class 483s “arrived in British Rail paintwork and were later branded in Network SouthEast livery”. In fact, the class 483s arrived on the Island already in Network SouthEast livery, having been painted as such at Eastleigh*). The article continues with a look at the present steam railway, what remains of the closed lines and what the future might be.

**02.02.17 THE TIMES** – What do you call a Roman soldier beheaded by rebels and buried upside down in London mud sometime in the 1st Century AD? The answer is *Doug*, for the skulls of 20 such unfortunates have been found beneath Liverpool Street station in the course of digging tunnels for the colossal civil engineering project known as Crossrail. In truth, the theory of the mass beheading is no more than that. No one knows how or why these Romans died, or what happened to the rest of their skeletons. There is added mystery in the fact that the skulls are all missing their lower jaws, but having a mystery is better than not having one at all. Archaeology owes much to the decision to proceed with Crossrail despite its £15B cost, and to the Ancient Monuments Act 1979, which makes damaging these monuments a crime. The rest of us benefit as well. The past in general explains the present, and there is pleasing symmetry to a project designed to smooth out the future that yields a more richly textured view of history.

**02.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – LU chiefs today warned of line and station closures across central London because of a planned strike by more than 3,000 staff. They issued the alert to prepare passengers for the disruption if peace talks fail. The strike is to start from 18.00 on Sunday until Wednesday lunchtime. LU published an emergency version of the traditional Tube Map showing which lines will be closed and where. The shut lines were grey and cover a large section of central London. Other lines will run but with reduced service. The most badly hit lines and station are within Zone 1. Some lines and stations outside the central area will also be closed for various lengths of time.

**02.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – *Letter by Colin Henry* – “So LU has now said it is going to hire 325 new workers, after making 900 jobs redundant when it closed ticket offices throughout the network. Therefore, it has admitted that it reduced staffing levels at stations to an unacceptable level”.

**02.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – *Letter by Ann Nee* – “While I, like many thousands of Londoners, have been greatly inconvenienced by the Underground strikes, I must speak up for Mayor Sadiq Khan. It is simply not right that stations should have had their staffing levels reduced by TfL (allowed under Boris Johnson’s tenure at City Hall) to the extent that many passengers now feel unsafe using stations late at night, and you have to wait ages for assistance if there is a problem with your Oyster card, or a malfunctioning gate when you are trying to exit. We should be glad that we have a mayor trying to broker a solution between TfL desperate to cut costs, and unions standing up for their members”.

**03.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Underground passengers wasted a staggering 44 years over the past 12 months due to delays to their journeys caused by overcrowding. This includes extra time passengers spent fighting through crowds and onto trains, delays to the trains themselves at stations due to the number of people, and the impact of queuing at barriers to even try to get on platforms. The LU statistics reveal a total extra journey time suffered by commuters owing to disruption that lasted two minutes or more. The number of incidents in which Underground delays were caused by overcrowding tripled between 2012 and 2016, from 136,644 hours to 390,786 hours – equivalent to 44 years. Commuters were most likely to waste a valuable chunk of their lives on the Jubilee Line – 147,451 hours, more than double the waiting time of other lines.

**03.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – The RMT union was meeting in crisis session today to decide whether to go ahead with four days of Underground strike action starting at 18.00 on 5 February. A walkout by 3,000 station staff over job cuts threatens chaos from 6 to 8 February. RMT and LU are holding talks and today the union was deciding whether to continue negotiations. (*Note: The intended strike action was suspended on 04.02.17 – IDM*).

**06.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Mayor Sadiq Khan has suggested he had saved London tens of millions of pounds that would have been lost to Underground strikes by talking directly to the unions. He said “constructive discussions” had resulted in the RMT suspended three days of action that had been planned for this week. The RMT, which represents station staff, said it was suspending the strikes because LU agreed to hire additional 325 staff, of whom 200 would be full time. The Mayor – who has invited the union bosses for “cups of tea” and discussions at City Hall – said: “The only way to resolve industrial disputes is by engaging and talking. I’m pleased to see that approach has resulted in the suspension of strikes that would have cost our economy tens of millions of pounds”.

**07.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – The Mayor’s “Night Czar” Amy Lamé has revealed that she had been groped on the Underground, as she pledged to tackle sexual assaults of women after dark in London. She admitted for the first time that she is among thousands of Londoners to have experienced an assault. The latest BTP figures show a spike in violent offences and sex crimes on the Underground. City Hall estimate that 1 in 10 women in the capital have been assaulted on the transport network as a whole – with less than 10% reporting the incident to police. Her plans include hosting a City Hall summit with more than 100 women from different fields, including policing, councils and rights groups, and planning to tackle “unacceptable” figures and boost the safety of women on nights. The event, planned for later this year, will endeavour to set up a women’s night safety charter to which individuals and organisations can sign up.

**07.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – *Letter by Lloyd Mudzengerere* – “London’s new Night Czar Amy Lamé is right to draw attention to the horrible sexual assaults that thousands of women endured on public transport. Women should be safe and feel free to travel on the Underground in the night without fear. Why do some men think that they can sexually harass women? More must be done by BT Police to stop these horrific attacks from happening”.

**08.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Mayor Sadiq Khan warned London’s transport network will grind to a halt under the “unbearable strain” of millions more passengers unless the Government jointly funds Crossrail 2. He predicted serious problems unless the new northeast-southwest line is built. This comes as government insiders revealed concerns about stumping up almost half the current £32B cost, with one claiming ministers were “going cold” on the idea. The remainder would be funded by London fare-payers, tax-payers and businesses. Sources told the *Standard* there was a question mark politically about whether the whole UK could be expected to pick up such a large bill for another London project.

**09.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – An IT expert lay undiscovered for up to seven hours after falling down stairs to his death at an Underground station. He is believed to have become trapped in an emergency stairwell at Canning Town station after mistakenly entering a staff-only door which slammed shut behind him. According to initial reports provided to his family, he spent up to an hour trying to find a way out before falling and hitting his head on a concrete step. It was not until around seven hours later, just before 09.30 on 22 January that BT Police were called after the discovery of his body. *The Standard* has learned that the inquiry is focussed on whether the emergency door alarm sounded and why staff overseeing the station’s 24-hour Jubilee Line *Night Tube* service did not discover his body sooner. His inquest has been adjourned awaiting the results of further tests, and a BTP inquiry is underway.

**09.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Underground trains running in tunnels with open windows are exposing commuters to a “very high concentration” of filthy air, scientists warned today. The Surrey University academics compare journeys on the sub-surface District Line with those on the deep level Northern and Victoria lines. Carriages on the District Line with open windows were found to have more than double the small particulate matter (PM) pollution level on average, than those with non-openable windows. Trains in tunnels on the Northern Line had more than 12 times the PM pollution than for those on sections above ground. PM pollution on both Northern and Victoria lines, where windows are normally open, was found to be more than three times higher than on the District. New trains planned by TfL for deep level lines will have sealed windows. Below ground station platforms had significantly higher PM levels than those above ground. Pollution underground on the network is largely believed to be due to brake and rail friction dust.

**09.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – TfL today set out plans to extend the Bakerloo Line to Lewisham. The route would include four new stations, two on Old Kent Road, one at a key interchange at New Cross Gate and the final one at Lewisham. But although it is set out as a capital scheme in the most recent TfL business plan, funding is not yet in place.

**10.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – A Catholic LU worker sued his bosses when they refused to give him five weeks off to visit Sardinia for religious festivals. He said it was part of his religious belief to attend the ancient saints’ festivals in his homeland with his children every August. But an employment tribunal rejected his religious discrimination case, and it has now been dismissed by an appeal judge who ruled his demands were “not genuine”. The worker is entitled to 38 days leave of holiday a year. Since 2009, LU had allowed him to take five weeks of annual leave each summer. But after a change of management he was told that from 2014, he would not be to continue the arrangement as it would be unfair on other staff. When bosses refused to let him take more than 15 consecutive days of annual leave, he raised a grievance, which was rejected, before suing his employers for religious discrimination in a legal case that began in 2015.

**10.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – The £500M rebuilding of Tottenham Court Road station was completed today with the opening of step-free access to both the Central and Northern lines. It became the 71st Underground station to provide step-free access for older and disabled passengers. The station is one of the busiest on the network, with more than 100,000 passengers a day, and has been called the “gateway to the West End”. Its complete modernisation and significant expansion are in preparation for the new Elizabeth line, which will run through the station next year, and also for the planned Crossrail 2.

**13.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – The threat of industrial action on the Underground in a dispute over jobs has ended after union officials accepted a deal. The TSSA union said it was calling off an overtime ban and now wanted a “rapid improvement” in Underground safety standards after the four-month dispute. The RMT union has already settled its dispute after LU agreed to restore hundreds of jobs cut under former mayor Boris Johnson.

**14.02.17 – 20.02.17 TIME OUT** – Ever wondered what lurks beneath London’s grubby pavements? Thanks to a new Crossrail exhibition, you can now find out. Since the TBMs were unleashed on London back in 2009, the Crossrail project has unearthed tons of weird stuff. And you can see the findings up close in “Tunnel; The Archaeology of Crossrail” at the Museum of London Docklands, where 500 of the most interesting objects discovered during the extensive digging will be on display. The exhibition covers 8,000 years of London history, with everything from 13,000 Victorian jam jars found near Tottenham Court Road to a load of human remains from what’s believed to be a Great Plague pit near Liverpool Street. But it’s not all dead bodies and kitchenware – the exhibition also includes interactive fun, videos from the tunnels and a wooden Tudor bowling ball. Even if you are not into tunnels, it definitely won’t be boring you.

**15.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – A mother told of her terror as she fell down the gap between an Underground train and platform when she tried to board with her baby. She was left “covered in bruises” and suffered back pain in the latest such incident at Baker Street. Her daughter’s pram tipped up and the child was only saved from injury because she was strapped in. The station is the most dangerous on the Underground for passengers falling down the gap as they try to board or alight from a train. The problem has been blamed on the £1.5B fleet of trains which have doors level with the platform. It makes wheelchair access easier but can increase the gap at certain points. According to latest TfL figures, 307 such incidents were recorded in 2015 – including 52 at Baker Street – triple the number before the new trains.

**15.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Hundreds of thousands of Underground commuters face major disruption next week after union barons today announced a fresh 24-hour strike on the Central Line. Members of RMT will walk out on 21 February. The dispute is over the “forced” transfer of eight drivers from their home depots from the eastern end of the line to others in central London, including Earl’s Court, meaning they have further to travel further. The union says it is being done without agreement – a claim denied by LU.

**15.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – Mayor Sadiq Khan came under pressure today to ban an Underground poster featuring Khloe Kardashian in a leotard just months after tightening TfL rules on advertising. Critics called on the Mayor to remove *Protein World’s* image starring the reality TV star amid concerns it could cause confidence issues for young women. The same company came under fire for its “Are you beach body ready?” poster which provoked a huge backlash when it appeared two years ago.

**17.02.17 WATFORD OBSERVER** – Watford MP Richard Harrington says the Secretary of State for Transport is “fully committed” to the Met. Line Extension. The future of the project has been questioned after the multi-million project was omitted from Mayor Sadiq Khan’s draft business plan last year. Following a meeting with Minister Chris Grayling, Mr. Harrington said he was given assurances the planned extension would go ahead. He said an agreement was reached back in 2014 between all the major stakeholders and substantial funding has already been committed. He was confident that the Mayor of London realises the importance of this scheme to deliver not only transport and housing benefits, but also economic growth.

**20.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – The *Night Tube* today faced its first strike threat – just six months after the 24-hour operation began. The RMT union ordered a strike ballot among its *Night Tube* drivers on the Central, Victoria, Northern, Jubilee and Piccadilly lines. The result will be declared on 14 March, meaning the walkouts could take place towards the end of next month. Union leaders ordered the ballot in a complex dispute over working conditions and overtime pay. The *Night Tube* began last August, nearly a year later than planned because LU chiefs and union bosses could not reach agreement on shift arrangements, pay and working conditions. The starting wage for a driver on the service is just under £50K a year. The RMT leader said the Night Tube agreement, different from that covering other drivers, is “blatantly discriminatory” because it prevents promotion and overtime pay does not apply until after a driver has exceeded 35 hours in a week. He said this prevents overtime being paid if there is a late finish to a service because of earlier disruption. The union is understood to represent just under half of *Night Tube* drivers, with the remainder mostly belonging to ASLEF. A walkout by RMT members would cause huge disruption to the 24-hour service, but some ASLEF drivers are also said to be unhappy with the situation and their union could join the dispute.

**20.02.17 EVENING STANDARD** – *Letter by Jonathan Cook* – “Last month’s Underground strike was a nightmare for Londoners and we now face another bout of chaos that we simply can’t afford, on the Central Line. This is a terrible advert for our city at a time when we should be convincing the world after Brexit that we are open for business. It is time for Sadiq Khan to clarify his position, with further strikes also being threatened. The mayor has already failed to deliver the “zero days of strikes” he promised during his term in office and now he must get a grip on this deteriorating situation. Commuters have suffered months of misery on the Underground”.

**23.02.17 CITY AM** – A new *Night Tube* map app has been launched for late night passengers looking for a midnight snack. App developer *Bappz* has added an interactive version of the Night Tube map to its *London Tube Map* app, showing all the open late-night and 24-hour McDonald’s within 300 metres of each station, marked with a McDonald’s icon. The closest restaurant to the app’s user will glow on the map.