

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), and not to the Editor of this journal. Please ensure that contributions are identified by date and source publication.

24.07.18 EVENING STANDARD – It was announced today that the Crossrail project will receive a £600M cash injection to plug a funding shortfall. The budget for the Elizabeth Line, due to open this year, is being increased by 4%, to £15.4B. The DfT said it was still below the original funding package of £15.9B.

25.07.18 EVENING STANDARD – Underground passengers enduring “inhuman” temperatures were left fuming after they were told it would be more than ten years before air-conditioned trains were introduced. Central Line regulars, who have compared recent journeys to “commuting in a volcano”, were invited to take part in a Q&A session on twitter. One commuter said: “The heat inside trains is reaching levels that are certainly dangerous for elderly people and children. What is being done to solve these unacceptable conditions for which we pay very high prices?”. The Central Line’s social media staffer wrote: “Hi, we’re aware of the heating issues. We’ve made improvement to the ventilation systems on the current fleet. New trains are coming in 2030, under the Deep Tube Upgrade Programme which will be delivered with full air-cooling systems”. Temperatures on the network’s second hottest line were said to be edging towards 34°C. The Bakerloo Line is the hottest. The “nonchalant” response from the Central Line was criticised on Twitter. One user wrote: “Waiting close to 12 years for air conditioning is not human or normal”. Central Line responded: “Don’t worry, if you travel forward in time – say like 12 years – this won’t even be a problem”. Another responded: “2030? Most passengers will be utterly desiccated by then”.

25.07.18 EVENING STANDARD – There was better news for Underground staff on the Northern Line, who have been given the option of wearing shorts to help them stay cool. If the 12-week trial at six stations on the line is a success, shorts could become a permanent uniform option for all Underground staff.

26.07.18 EVENING STANDARD – Renaming Southgate station in honour of the England football manager proved a money spinner for LU bosses trying to plug a funding gap. The Piccadilly Line station was rebranded for 48 hours earlier this month in a publicity stunt by VISA after England came 4th in the World Cup. Roundel signs reading “GARETH SOUTHGATE” were installed in platforms, in the ticket halls and outside the station., and a social media campaign encouraged fans to share selfies. VISA, a World Cup sponsor, picked up all the costs, while the deal earned TfL £80K. TfL is increasingly trying to find commercial deals to replace the £850M annual operating grant that has been axed by the Government. In April, Baker Street station was filled with gnomes to mark the release of the Sherlock Holmes film. Whiteboards around the ticket hall were also filled with messages such as “Gnome pun intended”.

31.07.18 EVENING STANDARD – A female Underground driver was attacked when fighting passengers on a late-night train forced their way into her cab. They screamed at her and blocked her from closing the driver’s door on the Northern Line service from King’s Cross last Saturday. Despite this, she managed to bring the train safely into Angel station. The BT Police said that two men from Seven Sisters had been arrested on suspicion of affray but have now been released under investigation as enquiries continue. The ASLEF union has threatened strike action unless LU increases security. Their spokesman said: “People became involved in a fight. Some forced their way into the driver’s cab and attacked her, preventing her from closing the door. She has been left badly shaken but suffered no serious physical injury. We fear it is only a matter of time before someone is seriously hurt unless LU makes drivers’ cabs secure”. TfL said: “We take the safety of our staff seriously and understand this would have been distressing. We are offering the staff member our full support and continue to work the BT Police to investigate the incident”.

02.08.18 EVENING STANDARD – The London Dungeon is facing calls to drop adverts, described as being “abhorrent” inviting visitors to “laugh” their way around its Jack the Ripper exhibit. Critics accused the attraction of “trivialising” violence against women in the “crass” adverts. The posters asking: “Will Jack the Ripper strike again?” invite visitors to “scream and laugh their way through London’s darkest history”. The issue of “Ripper tourism” is an ongoing concern for campaigners, but they claim the adverts

are an escalation as they “normalise violence against women” by “playing it for laughs”. TfL has been asked to ban the adverts in Underground carriages and stations.

07.08.18 METRO – Now that the countdown to Crossrail’s arrival is well underway, Acton is giving Chiswick and Ealing a run for their money. House buyers are realising that it’s probably west London’s best-connected area, with seven stations, three Underground lines, Overground and mainline services, and from the end of next year, journey times to Liverpool Street and Heathrow will be under 20 minutes. On top of this, it’s a friendly place to live, a new shopping centre is taking shape, and the South Acton Estate, once a blot on the landscape, is being regenerated and rebuilt.

07.08.18 METRO – *Post by Judi* – “I find the Kennington Underground announcements that Bank branch won’t be stopping there irritating, but in every journey, there is bound to be someone who’s not been that way recently and might need to know”.

07.08.18 METRO – *Post by Selina* – What about the blind and partially sighted on the Northern Line? They cannot see the boards. Or tourists?”.

08.08.18 METRO – Refurbishment work at St. Paul’s station; escalator works set to start on 9 August and runs until April 2019, will see the two escalators refurbished one at a time to boost their safety and reliability. This will ensure this station can manage the increasing passenger demand as London’s population continues to grow. Currently, more than 17M people use St. Paul’s station every year. During the work, on weekdays between 07.30 and 10.00, and 16.00 and 19.30, all westbound Central line trains will not stop and the station will be exit only. At all other times, entry will be via a staircase only, which has 99 steps. During busy times, TfL is advising passengers to use nearby Bank or Chancery Lane Central Line stations, or on alternative lines, Mansion House and Barbican stations. Escalators used on the Underground weigh around 40 tonnes. A typical 15-metre rise escalator has about 15,000 moving parts.

10.08.18 WATFORD OBSERVER – The Overground service which runs from Watford Junction to London Euston could be under threat, a source has claimed. With the ongoing HS2 developments at Euston, it is believed that the owner of the station, Network Rail, is “under pressure” for platform space. An idea which has been mooted in the past and has been suggested again is for the Overground service to be scrapped, and the Bakerloo Line extended to Watford Junction to compensate for the loss. When HS2 was revealed, a report suggested the Overground line could be removed, but TfL denied that would happen. Rumours have once again resurfaced. However, when approached by this newspaper, both TfL and Network Rail denied there was any truth in it. If the Bakerloo Line were to be extended up to Watford Junction, commuters would not be able to travel via Euston and instead would have to change. Network Rail made no comment in reference to whether they need platform space. An anonymous source says platforms 17 and 18 will be lost as a result of the new station being built as part of HS2, before a further three platforms will be incorporated into HS2 leaving just 13 platforms at Euston for non-HS2 services.

10.08.18 EVENING STANDARD – BT Police issued images of an “abusive” woman wanted for “threatening” a mother whose baby accidentally kicked her as they board a packed rush-hour Underground train, by “claiming she was carrying a knife”. The Police said the mother and her baby in a pram boarded a westbound Central Line train at Bank station at about 17.00-18.00. As they got on the busy carriage, the young child accidentally kicked the woman who was also boarding. Police said the woman demanded that the mother apologise “in an aggressive manner”. A BTP spokesman said: “Other passengers intervened to calm the situation, however the woman then intimated that she had a knife in her bag. At St. Paul’s station, a station staff member witnessed the altercation and helped move the mother and child off the train and away from the woman. This was a frightening ordeal for the family who were shaken up by this woman’s aggressive language”. The suspect then stayed on the train where she continued to verbally abuse other passengers who had tried to help the mother.

21.08.18 METRO – Research released to mark the second anniversary of the *Night Tube* shows that the service continues to contribute millions more to London’s economy than originally projected. A new report shows that in the past year the *Night Tube* has helped to generate £190M for the capital – almost £20M more than in its first year of operation. It is predicted to contribute £154M annually over the next ten years to the wider London economy. Demand has grown in its second year, with 8.7M passengers using it in 2017/18, compared to 7.8M in 2016/17. LU has said: “The increase in passenger numbers shows that the demand for the *Night Tube* remains strong, and that it is helping to transform London into

a truly 24-hour city. It has provided a significant boost to London's economy, supporting late night music venues, bars and restaurants, and we look forward to building on this success in the coming years". The service has been popular with visitors and Londoners, enabling millions to get home safely, quickly and affordably at night.

22.08.18 METRO – Brixton Underground station is step-free once again, with two new lifts installed. The modern replacements require less maintenance and operate faster, reducing journey times for customers. To complete the work as quickly as possible, both lifts were upgraded at the same time. The rest of the station, including the stairs and escalators, was unaffected and continued to run as normal.

22.08.18 EVENING STANDARD – *By columnist Lotte Jeffs* – "Commuting in my post-baby bubble has been quite a challenge. It turns out that very few others share my joie de vivre on the Jubilee Line daily at 08.30. I hope all you angry Tube-takers who push aggressively on to the carriage before I've got off engage with a new campaign to encourage people in stressful situations to take 90 seconds before reacting. Backed by the Police and charities such as the Prince's Trust, the "take 90" initiative stems from research that it takes 90 seconds to quell anger in the brain. It's also the amount of time it takes to get the on the next train rather than ram yourself into an overcrowded one".

23.08.18 DAILY MAIL – *By reporter Faye White* – Should children give train seats for adults? It's enough of a conundrum for adults – but now children have been drawn into the debate over when to give up your seat on a train. Former BBC Radio 5 Live presenter Shelagh Fogarty provoked a row on Twitter saying that fit a healthy children should never be given a seat in a busy carriage if they are old enough to stand. She said: "Toddlers have a seat of their own on the Underground. Should be a never event during rush hour. Or am I a horrible person? Any healthy kid in fact". She made her comments after sharing an Underground carriage where a family with three boys aged around 10 to 13 all had their own seats while the adults stood. She added: "In my mind, chances are several women in your carriage are menstruating, menopausal, or knackered from child rearing. Chivalry is lovely. It is also a human right when it comes to train seats". And Twitter users were quick to agree with the broadcaster's views. She found backing from a political commentator, who said children should go on the parent's lap and added: "My daughter is eight and she sits on my knee". Another supporter wrote: "Oh they're tired, are they? So am I and I've been tired for three more decades than them". A third said children should never sit if it means an adult has to stand, saying it helped them learn to be aware of others". But some defended the children, saying it was safer if they sat down. One also tweeted: "I tend to think if they've paid for a ticket they get a seat". *Editor's Note: It used to be a condition of carriage that children only pay half fare (as it was) if they didn't occupy a seat if adults were standing. It still seems to apply now in some form – see TfL Conditions of Carriage, section 4.5, under "Behaviour Code for 5-10, 11-15 and 16+ Oyster photocard holders". (It doesn't seem to work that way now though!).*

SEPTEMBER 2018 MODERN RAILWAYS – TfL has published a Periodic Indicative Notice seeking bidders for the design and build of a Mechanised Renewal Vehicle (MRV). TfL aims to improve the process of track renewal in LU's deep tube tunnels, which is currently labour-intensive, with the aim of the procurement being to improve workforce health and safety while unlocking efficiencies in the track replacement process. Through the procurement a supplier will be required to present a design that will allow for installation of plant on three refurbished wagons supplied by LU. The MRV will need to achieve a higher output of track renewal per shift, faster mobilisation of materials/tools to site, a faster setup time, improved health and safety and reduced cost per metre of renewed concrete. It will be hauled and powered by a LU battery locomotive. TfL says this is the first phase of the project, with later stages focusing on greater mechanisation to achieve higher levels of productivity.