

UNDERGROUND DIARY

AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER 2018

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Saturday 25 August began with a signal failure at Barking, suspending the District Line east of Plaistow and the Hammersmith & City Line east of Moorgate. The District Line resumed under failure conditions at 07.50 after points had been secured. However, services were once again suspended from 10.30 until 11.10 while a section of cable was replaced. The combination of the service disruption and a lack of Train Operators at Hammersmith prevented a swift return to timetable for the Hammersmith and Circle lines. Moreover, a problem with the OPO equipment at Kensington Olympia resulted in a 40-minute gap in the service while the problem was dealt with. A signal failure on the northbound Northern Line at Goodge Street from 07.50 caused the northbound service via Charing Cross to be thinned out because the passage of trains through the area was slow. Sections of cable had to be replaced which resulted in three short suspensions (in fact trains were held), two for ten minutes, the third for 20 minutes. Normal signalling was obtained at 09.20.

On **Sunday 26 August**, a missing Train Operator at Brixton caused a 20-minute delay to the Victoria Line south of Victoria from 07.50 until 08.10. A Train Operator became ill on a northbound Jubilee Line train at Kilburn at 14.45, causing a 20-minute delay while another Train Operator was sourced. A signal failure at Heathrow Terminal 5 at 16.55 suspended the Piccadilly Line west of T2 & 3 until 17.50.

Monday 27 August began with Lancaster Gate station closing from 07.10 until 08.15 because of insufficient staff. This was followed by Belsize Park station closing from 09.20 to 09.40 because of a fire alarm activation. Points failing at Brixton from 15.30 delayed the Victoria Line south of Victoria, culminating with a suspension south of Victoria from 16.15 until 16.40, with one train being stalled approaching Brixton for the duration.

Tuesday 28 August was thus:

- 20-minute delay Hammersmith eastbound Piccadilly Line from 16.40 – defective train, which was detrained and worked to the siding. Two trains were stalled between stations throughout.
- 20-minute delay at Great Portland Street from 12.55 – passenger trackside on the eastbound.
- Bakerloo Line suspended north of Stonebridge Park 22.55 to 23.30 – points failure at Wembley Central on the (little-used) ground frame.
- District Line suspended west of Parsons Green 23.35 until 00.25 – combination of a defective South Western Railway train and points failure at Wimbledon.

A track circuit failure at Rayners Lane from 06.55 on **Wednesday 29 August** caused delays to the Metropolitan Line service, with the Piccadilly Line suspended west of South Harrow until 07.30. A Network Rail signal failure at Harrow & Wealdstone from 07.40 suspended the Bakerloo Line north of Stonebridge Park until 08.30. A restricted service of three trains operated in the evening peak (16.30 to 18.30) on the Waterloo & City Line, with two trains becoming defective at once. The day ended towards the close of traffic with points failing at Rickmansworth at 00.55, delaying the 00.49 Watford to Rickmansworth via the North Curve. Once in the platform, the failure continued with two trains stalled between stations for 40 minutes.

Thursday 30 August began with signalling and traction current problems on the Northern Line following overnight engineering work, resulting in a reduced service via the City until the middle of the morning peak. Insufficient staff kept Chancery Lane station closed until 06.05. A signal failure on the eastbound approach to Farringdon from 11.10 suspended all SSR services through the area until 11.50. Three trains were stalled between stations for between 10 and 25 minutes. An intermittent signal failure approaching Leytonstone on the westbound from the Epping direction occurred at 17.35 causing delays from that branch. Although the failure was fixed by 20.20, two defective trains at Leytonstone westbound became stalled at 18.55, one for 20 minutes, the other for 30 minutes. The Central Line was disrupted later in the evening with a person under a westbound train at Tottenham Court Road at 23.20. One westbound train between Holborn and Tottenham Court Road was authorised to return to the former, arriving at 00.15. Services were suspended between Liverpool Street and Marble Arch until 00.55 to very late last trains, omitting most 'underground' stations which had closed because of insufficient staffing levels.

The only serious incident on **Friday 31 August** was a person struck by a train south of Warren Street, suspending the Victoria Line between Warren Street and Victoria from 16.25 until 17.50. During the

suspension period, six trains shuttled between Victoria and Brixton and 18 trains between Warren Street and Walthamstow Central. In consequence, Oxford Circus station closed from 17.00 to 18.10 to prevent overcrowding.

In Night Tube hours early on **Saturday 1 September** the Victoria Line was held for 20 minutes from 03.05 while a track inspection took place at Warren Street following the previous evening's incident (q.v.). There were also problems on the Piccadilly Line with a signal failure between Barons Court and Hammersmith. Once points were secured, services were diverted via the westbound District Line from 03.00 to 04.20.

Another serious incident occurred on the Jubilee Line just before 09.00. A northbound train, having had door problems at Finchley Road, departed with some of the passenger doors open and travelled at (what appeared to be – from the video on social media) normal line speed to West Hampstead, arriving with the affected doors open on the opposite side to the platform. There, the open doors were closed and then opened on the correct side. The train was then taken out of service to the siding. Fortunately, the train was very lightly loaded and nobody fell out – it might have been a different story on a weekday evening rush hour! (*A previous serious incident occurred on 21 June 2018, also at Finchley Road, where a southbound train began to depart north in the wrong direction*).

Moorgate station closed from 09.15 to 09.40 because of a fire alarm activated on the Great Northern side of the station. At the other end of the day, just at the close of traffic, with traction current discharged because of a person trackside at South Harrow, the last westbound train to Uxbridge was stalled at the westbound home signal at 01.15. Once clear, it departed at 02.00 for Uxbridge.

On **Sunday 2 September** an eastbound District Line train departed Ealing Broadway at 11.50 and then lost its 'pilot light' (door closed) visual and having stopped, two pairs of doors were found open. Passengers were then moved to the leading car and at Ealing Common was detrained and sent to Ealing Common Depot, causing a 15-minute delay. A person under a southbound train at Marylebone suspended the Bakerloo Line between Queen's Park and Piccadilly Circus from 17.35 – reversing north to south at the latter was a rare move indeed! Services resumed at 18.40 with Marylebone LU station reopening at 19.10. The District and Hammersmith & City lines were delayed for 20 minutes at the east end from 19.20 because of a loss of signal main between East Ham and Upney.

Piccadilly Line services to Heathrow were late starting up on **Monday 3 September** because of a late finish to overnight re-railing work at Terminal 4. Services reversed west to east at Hatton Cross and began to Heathrow at 05.55. The Central Line went into delays mode from 20.10 when an eastbound train was halted approaching Stratford by the operation of an emergency stop plunger (ESP), because of a child's scooter on the track. Whilst only an initial 10-minute delay, the inability to reset the plunger meant that trains could only continue through the area in restricted manual mode until technicians reset it at 20.55.

The only incident on **Tuesday 4 September** was a late start to the Central Line because of signalling problems at White City. Services were suspended west of Leytonstone from the start of traffic and began at 06.00.

Wednesday 5 September was similarly quiet with only a defective northbound train at Camden Town causing a 20-minute delay from 08.55.

On **Thursday 6 September**, a signalling problem at Edgware at 13.20 prevented trains departing from Edgware at normal line speed. Selected trains were terminated at Colindale and Golders Green in consequence. In the meanwhile, by the time this problem was fixed (at 16.50) a points failure at Tooting Broadway from 15.05 suspended the Northern Line south of Stockwell. Two northbound trains were stalled between stations, that approaching Colliers Wood for 25 minutes and another approaching Tooting Broadway for 45 minutes. Services resumed at 16.25 with 15 trains cancelled for evening peak.

A signal failure westbound approaching Latimer Road began at 05.45 on **Friday 7 September**. A defective cable was diagnosed but with a suspension of around half an hour to fix it, it was decided to leave it until after traffic as there was little impact on the service. A multiple signal failure on the northbound between Waterloo and Embankment from 16.50 disrupted the Bakerloo Line during the evening peak. After an initial stand of 25 minutes, trains were then able to pass through (slowly!) under failure conditions until fixed at 17.30. There was one other incident later in the evening, of persons under a southbound Jubilee Line train at Baker Street, which suspended the service between Finchley Road and Waterloo from 22.10 to 23.00. One southbound train was stalled approaching Baker Street for 35 minutes. *More details in "the Papers", page 662, this issue.*

The only incidents of note on **Saturday 8 September** included King's Cross LU station closing from 06.40 to 07.05 because of a fire alarm activation, a person trackside at Canons Park at 09.00, causing a 20-minute delay to the Jubilee Line, a signal failure at Ruislip Manor from 18.10 with the Piccadilly Line suspended west of Rayners Lane until 20.15, and Goodge Street station closing from 19.30 to 20.50 because of lift defects.

St. Paul's station closed from 07.00 on **Sunday 9 September** because of insufficient staff, reopening at 08.15. The southbound Northern Line service via Charing Cross was suspended from 12.20 because of a person under a train at Warren Street. Southbound trains via this route were diverted via the City, as is usual during such incidents, but were unable to detrain at Kennington as the City branch platform was closed for building work. In consequence, Kennington trains were extended to Stockwell to reverse south to north. Services resumed and Warren Street reopened at 13.35. Just at the close of traffic, the penultimate train to stable in Lillie Bridge Depot became derailed, with S7 DM 21480 being that involved. There was no delay to passenger trains, with the one remaining train for depot being outstabled.

On **Monday 10 September**, the derailment in Lillie Bridge Depot prevented six District Line trains entering service from the start of traffic and remained so until late morning. Also from the start of traffic, the Jubilee Line was unable to start up between Green Park and Canary Wharf until 06.25 because of a defect on points at London Bridge. During the service recovery process, a suspicious vehicle close to Stratford station caused the Jubilee Line to be suspended between West Ham and Stratford and the London Overground between Hackney Wick and Stratford from 08.00 (trains ran empty between their respective two sections in both directions) with all other services non-stopping until clear at 08.25.

Tuesday 11 September was uneventful until 12.05 when a multiple signal failure on the northbound approach to Harrow-on-the-Hill suspended the Metropolitan Line north of Wembley Park. A severed cable was identified and replaced. A shuttle service between Harrow and Uxbridge resumed at 13.55 with through services at 14.30. Three trains were stalled between stations, one north of Preston Road authorised to return to the station by 12.35, one on the northbound fast at Harrow until 12.50 and one on the northbound local until 13.30. Bond Street station closed at 18.00 because of a person reported with a firearm, with Jubilee and Central Line trains non-stopping. Two people were detained, one carrying a firearm. The station reopened with restricted access and egress at 20.35 and fully open from 22.10.

On **Wednesday 12 September**, cables adrift alongside platform 1 at Harrow-on-the-Hill caused a 25-minute delay to a Down Chiltern Railways train from 08.15 while the cables were made safe. A track circuit failure at Epping suspended the Central Line east of Debden from 11.40. One train stalled approaching Epping was authorised to return to Theydon Bois, arriving at 12.25. Services resumed at 12.30. Two people trackside at Bayswater at 12.30 suspended the Hammersmith & City Line west of Edgware Road, the Circle Line between Edgware Road and Hammersmith/High Street Kensington and the District Line between High Street Kensington and Edgware Road. One westbound train was stalled at Praed Street Junction until 13.05 with services resuming at 13.30. Lift defects necessitated Regent's Park station closing from 12.45 until 21.40.

There was a 20-minute late start to Jubilee Line services through Canary Wharf from the start of traffic on **Thursday 13 September** because of a defect on points. Also suspended from the start of traffic was the Bakerloo Line north of Queen's Park because of incomplete overnight work on Network Rail metals – services began at 06.25. At 18.45 a train stabling in Hainault Depot became 'gapped' (off current), suspending the Central Line between Hainault and Woodford until 19.25.

The Heathrow branch of the Piccadilly Line was late starting on **Friday 14 September** because of an obstruction over the track in the platform area at Northfields. Once pigeon netting and its framing were removed, services began at 05.15. At midnight, signals failing between Triangle Sidings and High Street Kensington brought District and Circle Line services to a stand, right through to the end of traffic. Two trains were stalled, one until 00.35 but the second train, which was adjacent to Triangle Sidings, was eventually returned to Earl's Court, arriving at 01.30.

On **Saturday 15 September** there was a protracted signal failure at Mile End on the westbound from 05.55, which affected the District Line for much of the day. The service was held in the area a number of times for investigative purposes, such that by late morning some 18 District Line and seven H&C/Circle Line trains had been cancelled. The failure cleared itself by mid-afternoon, only to return briefly in the evening. Other problems included Finsbury Park station closing from 04.35 to 05.00 because of a fire

alarm activated and the suspension of the Piccadilly Line between Heathrow T2,3 and T5 from 06.50 to 07.20 because of passenger action at the latter.

The Jubilee Line was suspended north of Wembley Park from 10.10 on **Sunday 16 September** because of platform nosing stones having become loose on the northbound at Canons Park. Once the area had been made safe, services resumed at 12.00 (with 20 trains cancelled at that time) but the northbound platform remained closed until the end of traffic (although one train did stop inadvertently stop late in the evening, letting passengers off). A defective Metropolitan Line train in the middle platform at Uxbridge was unable to move at 22.10, thus restricting platform availability. The Piccadilly Line was suspended west of Ruislip until 23.00 in consequence, by which time the problem had been resolved.

Monday 17 September was thus:

- Defective northbound Northern Line train north of Mornington Crescent from 07.15. Restricted manual mode to Camden Town and then again from Kentish Town to Archway, where it was stabled in the siding. The northbound gap to the High Barnet branch was thus 40 minutes.
- Signal failure Edgware Road at 06.45 with District Line suspended east of High Street Kensington and reduced service on the H&C and Circle lines. Six trains cancelled in consequence.
- Signal failure King's Cross westbound SSR from 17.25. Metropolitan Line suspended into the City with the C&H continuing under failure conditions until fixed at 18.15.

Warren Street station went into 'exit only' mode between 08.45 and 09.45 on **Tuesday 18 September** because of escalator defects. The only other problem during the day was a points failure at Bank at 16.30, suspending the Waterloo & City Line until 17.15.

On **Wednesday 19 September** a late finish to overnight work between Finchley Road and Baker Street prevented the Metropolitan Line from starting up south of Wembley Park until 06.10. Colliers Wood station closed from 05.55 because of fire sprinklers being operated which flooded the escalator machine room. Once mopping up had been completed the station reopened at 10.25. A signal failure on the westbound at Russell Square from 06.00 resulted in a disrupted morning peak for the Piccadilly Line with 18 trains cancelled in consequence. A northbound Northern Line train hit a fallen tree approaching Mill Hill East at 13.05, suspending the shuttle service until 13.55. The District Line's Richmond service was suspended for 30 minutes from 15.10 because of a security alert at Richmond.

The only notable incident on **Thursday 20 September** was the suspension of the Metropolitan Line north of Rickmansworth from 18.10 because of a tree across both tracks north of Chorleywood with one northbound train running over it. Once the debris was cleared from under the train, it was able to proceed into Chalfont & Latimer, arriving (still with passengers) at 20.45. Services resumed at 21.25.

The main event of **Friday 21 September** was a loss of signalling control in the Aldgate area at 17.50, suspending the Metropolitan Line into the City, the Hammersmith & City east of Moorgate, the Circle Line in its entirety and (to provide 'breathing space at Edgware Road) the District Line east of High Street Kensington. Three trains were stalled between stations, one approaching Liverpool Street authorised to return to Moorgate by 18.35, as was one train at Aldgate North Junction back to Liverpool Street at the same time. The third train, on the North Curve, was able to move towards Liverpool Street at 18.45. Services resumed at 19.00 with 12 Metropolitan and 11 C&H trains cancelled in consequence, right through to the close of traffic.

There were just two station closures on **Saturday 22 September**, first in Night Tube hours, when Green Park closed from 04.15 to 04.40 and second at South Kensington from 18.00 to 18.35, both because of fire alarms activated.

Three separate 'passenger action' incidents delayed the Piccadilly Line during Night Tube operations on **Sunday 23 September**, at Covent Garden (03.30), King's Cross (03.40) and Manor House (04.15), all on the eastbound. The Metropolitan Line occupied the morning, beginning with a signal failure on the northbound approach to Finchley Road at 10.05. Trains worked through the area under failure conditions until fixed at 11.00. In the meanwhile, a large tree across both southbound tracks at the south end of Northwick Park station suspended the southbound service south of Harrow-on-the-Hill from 10.40, both directions from 11.30 and south of Northwood and east of Rayners Lane from 12.00. Once the tree was removed, services south to Baker Street resumed at 12.20 (with ten trains cancelled) and to the City at 13.40. With the Rayners Lane area being congested with Metropolitan Line trains, certain Piccadilly Line trains were reversed short at South Harrow.

The early morning of **Monday 24 September** was a troublesome one. The northbound Victoria Line was unable to start up until 06.00 because of a cracked rail at Oxford Circus, while the first northbound Northern Line train through Camden Town was 20 minutes late because of an inspection needed on points approaching the station. In addition, computer signalling problems with the Bakerloo Line timetable, with trains having to be routed manually, caused ten cancellations during the morning peak (18 trains running Queen's Park – Elephant & Castle and three Harrow – Kilburn High Road shuttle). A reload of the timetable later took place and the whole line was brought to a stand for 20 minutes from 10.00 while this was done. A signal failure on the westbound at Holloway Road from 14.45 set the Piccadilly Line into delays mode, with 11 trains cancelled for the evening peak. Even though the failure had been cleared by 16.00, service recovery was protracted with late running and displaced crews, right through until late in the evening. Blocking back of trains occurred not only on the Acton Town approaches but also at Arnos Grove where the queue of trains stretched back to Finsbury Park.

A person under a southbound Victoria Line train at Finsbury Park at 10.00 suspended the Victoria Line between Seven Sisters and King's Cross on **Tuesday 25 September**. Services resumed at 11.10 with ten trains cancelled in consequence. One train was stalled approaching Finsbury Park for the duration. Smoke from a southbound Victoria Line train at Highbury & Islington at 13.25 caused a 20-minute delay, with the station reopening at 13.55. A signal failure between Tottenham Court Road and Chancery Lane from 16.35 affected both Central Line tracks with trains passing through the area under failure conditions. Although fixed by 17.30, it resulted in 19 cancelled trains.

On **Wednesday 26 September**, a signal failure on the westbound at Becontree from the start of traffic resulted in a disrupted morning peak on the District Line. The fault was fixed by 08.20, by which time 17 trains had been cancelled. Service recovery was hampered by a SPAD on the westbound SSR at King's Cross for 20 minutes, with trains blocking back as far as Aldgate East and thus delaying the District Line. Details of the effects of the Piccadilly Line Train Operators' strike follows at the end of this summary.

Thursday 27 September was as follows:

- 20-minute delay between Upney and Barking at 09.30 – SPAD by a westbound train which was authorised to return to Upney platform.
- 25-minute delay approaching Harrow-on-the-Hill at 12.20 – SPAD by a northbound train.
- Escalator problems at Victoria at 08.50 necessitated the station's closure. Difficulties in evacuating passengers kept the station closed until 09.40. (*See also "the Papers", page 666 this issue*).

Apart from the under-par Piccadilly Line service (q.v.), **Friday 28 September** offered no excursions from the norm.

On **Saturday 29 September**, the Chesham service was suspended from 18.15 to 19.30 because of persons on the track south of Chesham station. The incident train was stalled on the branch for 30 minutes. Chalk Farm station closed from 22.50 until 00.45 because of a local power failure.

In Night Tube hours early on **Sunday 30 September**, Piccadilly Line trains non-stopped Acton Town from 03.55 to 04.25 until because of passenger action on a westbound train. Northern Line trains non-stopped Tottenham Court Road twice during the day, both because of a local power failure – 09.20 to 10.10 and 15.25 to 16.00. The District Line service was disrupted through Embankment from 19.50 because of a signal failure on the westbound. Trains worked through the area under failure conditions with the service held for 15 minutes from 21.15 while the problem was rectified.

THE STRIKE

The 48-hour strike was due to begin at 12.00 on Wednesday 26 September and continue until 12.00 on Friday 28 September by 'daytime' crews. A further five-hour strike took place from 20.30 on Friday evening by 'Night Tube' Train Operators.

The first train to be taken out of service on **Wednesday 26 November** was at 10.30 and services were gradually reduced through the middle day period, with eight cancelled trains by late morning and 16 at midday. By 15.00, only 16 trains were in service and an hour later the service over the entire line was suspended and remained so for the rest of the day and all day **Thursday 27 November**.

With the strike ending at 12.00 on **Friday 28 September** and yet another one beginning at 20.30 the same evening, the intervening period could only muster a limited service. The service began around 10.45 between Acton Town and Heathrow T2,3. Running from Cockfosters through the central area began at 13.30 and from 14.00 an Acton Town – Rayners Lane shuttle began. During the afternoon, 41

trains ran between Cockfosters and Heathrow with five between Acton Town and Rayners Lane. By mid-evening, services began to reduce again with last trains by 22.30 and no Night Tube service.



On **Saturday 29 September** a limited service started up around 06.00 with additional trains brought into service as crews reported for duty. By 09.00 a near-normal service was in operation with just a handful of cancellations.

Left: *The only Piccadilly Line train 'on the road' on Thursday 27 November was this six-car, seen near Acton Town having worked on the South Ealing test tracks. DM 246 is nearest the camera on the eastbound local line with the eastbound fast line immediately to the left. The westbound District and Piccadilly tracks towards Ealing Common are on the bridge at top left.*

Photo: Trevor Wright