

UNDERGROUND DIARY

APRIL 2011

Two signals remaining at danger on the eastbound Piccadilly Line at Ravenscourt Park resulted in 'delays' for the Piccadilly Line from 07.00 on **Friday 1 April**. The fault was rectified by 08.30 but service recovery was hampered by train staffing issues because of the previous evening's defective train at Piccadilly Circus (see previous issue, page 276). The situation worsened as the day went on, with 30 trains being cancelled for the evening peak as a result of staffing issues (see also page 350, this issue). Another defective Jubilee Line train caused a 30-minute shut-down between Stanmore and West Hampstead at 08.20, when a southbound train could only move off from Dollis Hill in slow speed. The outer rail Circle Line was suspended from 14.25 to 15.10 because of a signal failure at Gloucester Road.

A local power failure prevented Borough station from opening until 08.45 on **Saturday 2 April**. Smoke in the northbound Victoria Line platform area at Highbury & Islington suspended services between King's Cross and Seven Sisters from 08.40 to 09.25. Recovery was hampered with a number of other minor delays, plus the fact there was a temporary speed restriction imposed from the start of traffic north of Highbury, all of which resulted in an average of four trains then being cancelled for much of the day.

On **Sunday 3 April**, Notting Hill Gate was unable to open until 08.00 because of defective fire alarm equipment. A person under a northbound Metropolitan Line train at Finchley Road at 08.45 suspended services south of Wembley Park and also the Jubilee Line between West Hampstead and London Bridge from 09.00 until 09.15. The Metropolitan Line resumed at 10.00. Regent's Park closed from 10.05 to 11.40 because of lift defects.

The only notable problem on **Monday 4 April** was a defective westbound Jubilee Line train approaching Green Park at 13.10, which resulted in a 30-minute delay.

On **Tuesday 5 April**, a person ill on an outer rail Circle Line train at South Kensington at 07.35 suspended SSR services through the area until 08.20. A passenger fall attempting to board a westbound Piccadilly Line train at Covent Garden at 16.10 resulted in a 15 minute delay. However, westbound trains non-stopped until 17.10.

A person on the westbound track at Chancery Lane suspended the Central Line service between Liverpool Street and Marble Arch from 09.30 until 10.00 on **Wednesday 6 April**. Much of the day's 'action', however, occurred during the late evening, beginning with the Bakerloo Line at 21.20, which was suspended north of Stonebridge Park until 22.00 because of a problem on the adjacent main line at Wembley Central. A points failure at Brixton at 21.40 suspended the Victoria Line south of Victoria until 23.15. Two southbound trains stalled on the approach to Brixton were authorised to return to Stockwell in turn.

Three signals failing on the westbound approach to Knightsbridge from 06.00 on **Thursday 7 April** initially caused 'minor delays' to the Piccadilly Line, but when the failure re-occurred at 07.00, the delays soon became 'severe'. Although there was no suspension as such, the queue of trains and the time taken to pass through the affected section (the 'too many trains syndrome') was such that a 'suspension' wouldn't have gone amiss! A total of 15 trains were cancelled for the morning peak. Meanwhile, clear signals were achieved at 08.20. The Central Line had a multiple signal failure at Loughton from 07.30 and again trains continued through the affected area under failure conditions, with a much reduced service on the Epping branch, with some 7 trains cancelled for the morning peak. It wasn't until 10.40 that normal signalling was restored. A SPAD by an eastbound District Line train at West Kensington resulted in a 30-minute stand through the area from 09.00. A signal systems failure at Stratford suspended the Jubilee Line east of North Greenwich from 11.45 to 12.15. A local power failure closed Oxford Circus at 23.20 until the end of traffic.

Friday 8 April was thus:

- SSR services delayed for 20 minutes through Liverpool Street from 07.55 – small track fire.
- Central Line suspended west of Ruislip Gardens 12.30 to 14.00 – signal failure at West Ruislip.

- Warwick Avenue station closed 12.40 to 13.05 – escalator defects.
- Jubilee Line suspended east of North Greenwich 21.40 to 22.10 – defective train exiting Stratford Market depot.
- A Bakerloo Line train was derailed by one pair of wheels on car 3233 entering London Road depot at 23.45. Nine trains had to be outstabled, at Harrow & Wealdstone siding (1), Stonebridge Park (3), Queen's Park (3), Elephant & Castle (1) and the northbound platform at Lambeth North (1).

At 21.45 on **Saturday 9 April**, a Northern Line train, reversing north to south north of Charing Cross because of weekend engineering work, failed to stop at the stopping mark, continuing north for a short distance towards Leicester Square, then returning southwards towards the shunt signal. Services were suspended for some 20 minutes while the situation was assessed. The Victoria Line then had two separate delays, beginning with a person ill on a northbound train at King's Cross at 22.15 which suspended services south of Highbury. Then at 22.30 a points failure at Seven Sisters brought the rest of the line to a stand until 22.55, when through services resumed.

The only incident of note on **Sunday 10 April** was another points failure at Seven Sisters, which suspended services north of King's Cross from 21.50 to 22.40. One train stalled on the southbound approach to Seven Sisters was authorised to return to Tottenham Hale.

Monday 11 April was uneventful until midday, when a cable fire at the west end of Putney Bridge station suspended the service between Earl's Court and Wimbledon. The passengers on the train stalled at the westbound home signal had to be detrained via the track, being completed by 13.30, after which services were able to resume as far as Parsons Green. However, the whole of the Wimbledon branch was suspended throughout from 15.00 with a signal main current loss between Earl's Court and Putney Bridge. One train was stalled at the West Brompton home signal and was authorised into the station by 16.00. A limited service was able to resume to Wimbledon at 18.50, but with one signal failing on the westbound between Parsons Green and Putney Bridge, trains had to pass through the area under failure conditions. These incidents resulted in 23 trains cancelled for the evening peak. A westbound Central Line train stalled gapped off current on the approach to West Ruislip at 17.25, suspended services west of Northolt until 18.35, 'high shoes' reportedly being the cause. One train stalled behind the incident train was authorised to return to Ruislip Gardens arriving at 17.50. Points failing in the north shed at Queen's Park suspended the Bakerloo Line north of Queen's Park from 18.05 until 18.50. However, with the problem not then resolved, a Harrow – Kilburn High Road shuttle was introduced and continued until 21.00, by which time the fault was fixed.

On **Tuesday 12 April** a westbound Piccadilly Line train stalled in the platform at Barons Court shortly after 09.00. Being at the height of the rush hour, trains were held in platforms to the rear until clear at 09.30. A smell of burning under an eastbound Jubilee Line train at Bermondsey brought 'the extension' to a stand at 09.35, with trains terminating at Green Park and running empty to and from Charing Cross. One stalled eastbound train approaching London Bridge was authorised to return to Southwark, but this was aborted when the all-clear was given at 10.00. Services resumed at 10.15. Points failing at Upminster suspended the District Line east of Hornchurch from 11.50. The incident train stalled at the home signal was authorised to return to Upminster Bridge, arriving at 12.35. Services resumed at 13.00, but with platform 5 out of use for the rest of the day. An item to make local news occurred at Victoria on the District Line at Victoria just before 16.00. What was reported as a 'loud bang' with passengers 'absolutely terrified' and 'people tripping up over each other as they ran up the stairs', turned out to be an air burst and suspended SSR services through the area until 16.35. *The BBC continued to report on their website "The Tube train (sic – it wasn't 'tube'!) has been moved to Mansion House depot (actually bay platform!) in central London". Hey ho – Ed.*

Wednesday 13 April was thus:

- Edgware Road Bakerloo Line station closed 11.00 to 13.30 and 15.00 to 20.20 – lift defects.
- Northern Line suspended north of Finchley Central 13.30 to 14.20 – defective train at West Finchley.
- Another points failure at Seven Sisters disrupted the Victoria Line from 16.30. One of the reversing sidings was taken out of use until the end of traffic. A defective train on the northbound

at Oxford Circus added to the misery, with service recovery hampered by reduced reversing facilities at Seven Sisters.

- Victoria Line suspended north of Seven Sisters 20.20 to 21.35 – defective train at Walthamstow.

.... while **Thursday 14 April** offered the following:

- District and Circle lines suspended through South Kensington from start until 06.20 – points failure.
- Further points problems at Seven Sisters rendered one of the reversing sidings out of use (again!) from 07.50 until the end of traffic. Four trains were cancelled for the evening peak to give some 'breathing space' in the timetable.
- A combination of a defective train at Canning Town and points failing at London Bridge (whilst trying to reverse the service because of the Canning Town problem), suspended the Jubilee Line east of Waterloo from 09.05 to 09.45.
- Jubilee Line suspended east of North Greenwich 11.50 to 12.15 – signalling problems at Stratford.
- District and Hammersmith & City Line suspended east of Bromley-by-Bow and Moorgate respectively from 15.55 because of a multiple signal failure at West Ham. Four sets of points were eventually secured and services resumed at 17.15 (District Line) and 18.15 (H&C).
- Central Line suspended west of North Acton 20.50 to 21.35 – trackside fire at North Acton Junction.

Friday 15 April began with a signal failure on the westbound at Westminster from 06.45, which delayed the District Line and suspended the outer rail Circle Line until 08.00. Points failing west of Heathrow T123 at HEx Junction suspended the service to Terminal 5 and around the T4 loop. One train from T4 was stalled approaching HEx Junction and was authorised to return to T4, where it arrived at 08.45. Services resumed at 09.55. Smoke from a ventilation shaft infiltrated the westbound Piccadilly Line platform at South Kensington just after midday, suspending the Piccadilly Line between Hyde Park Corner and Hammersmith until 12.45. However, South Kensington station remained closed until 13.25 for the District and Circle lines and until 16.20 on the Piccadilly Line.

Points failing at Bromley-by-Bow suspended the District Line between there and Aldgate East from 05.55 to 06.25 on **Saturday 16 April** – the line was also suspended for weekend engineering work between Bromley-by-Bow and East Ham. A cable fire at Cromwell Road Junction (where the District Line to High Street and Gloucester Road diverges) suspended the Edgware Road service from 20.05 and west of South Kensington from 21.00, along with the Circle Line. Services resumed at 21.50.

The only incident of note on **Sunday 17 April** was a multiple signal failure on the westbound District Line between Barons Court and Hammersmith from 13.30. This suspended the Richmond and Ealing services west of Earl's Court until 14.30.

Notting Hill Gate station failed to open until 06.00 on **Monday 18 April** because of insufficient staff. A loss of signal main current between Campbell Road (at the top of Bow bank) and Upney brought the District and Hammersmith & City lines to a stand east of Aldgate East from 12.15 to 12.35. A multiple signal failure at Walthamstow Central suspended the Victoria Line north of Seven Sisters from 16.10 to 17.25, while lift defects closed Tufnell Park station from 18.30 to 19.25. Just after midnight, the route from the eastbound Piccadilly to the northbound Victoria Line at Finsbury Park failed for an engineers train destined for the latter. This suspended the Piccadilly Line east of Hyde Park Corner and the Victoria Line north of Victoria. Services resumed at 00.35 but the engineers train was diverted to Cockfosters depot.

Tuesday 19 April was relatively uneventful until 18.35 when a traction earth on 'the extension' brought the whole of the Jubilee Line to a stand, because of trains losing power south of Finchley Road and then unable to get movement again. Four trains were stalled between stations, one of which returned wrong line to West Hampstead but the other three had to be detrained via the track, the last not completed until 20.50. A limited service resumed between Neasden and Stanmore from 19.50 and north from West Hampstead from 21.10. The rest of the Jubilee Line remained suspended until the end of traffic while attempts were made to move the stalled trains, some by 'hand pumping' to gain movement the last of which were stabled at Stratford by 03.20 and at the north end of the line by 03.45. Interestingly, no trains were recorded as cancelled later in the evening, making the 99% of trains run a trifle inaccurate! A signalling problem between Notting Hill Gate and High Street Kensington suspended the inner rail Circle Line and the District Line's Edgware Road service from

20.30. Following lengthy investigations, emergency 'point-to-point' working was implemented from just before midnight until the end of traffic.

The Jubilee Line continued to be in the news on **Wednesday 20 April**, with a signal failure on the southbound at Baker Street from the start of traffic. Initially trains worked through the area under failure conditions but because of the time taken by each train, the service was suspended between Finchley Road and London Bridge from 06.50, widened to be Willesden Green – London Bridge from 07.20. Once the system had been rebooted, services resumed at 09.15. All this culminated in 30 out of the 51 trains being cancelled for the morning peak. Whether or not this failure was related in some way to the previous day's problems still remains speculative! A person trackside near Boston Manor at 14.45 suspended the Piccadilly Line west of Acton Town and the District Line's Ealing Broadway service, the latter because of traction current feeding arrangements. Services resumed at 15.50 after the person had been removed. Just before this, however, the Central Line was suspended between Leytonstone and Liverpool Street from 14.30 to 15.15 because of a westbound train at Leyton with a defective motor and emitting smoke. Just as this incident was drawing to a close, another kicked off at Bond Street at 15.05 when a westbound train was unable to move off because of an air burst, this time suspending services between Holborn and White City until 15.50. Then at 16.10, points failing at British Museum disused station suspended the line between Leytonstone and White City but also trapped seven trains between stations. Services were able to resume at 16.50 but was delayed by a westbound train at Liverpool Street from 16.40 to 17.05 with door problems.

On **Thursday 21 April**, St. John's Wood station closed from 12.20 to 13.20 because of escalator defects. A northbound train stalled on the approach to Finchley Central at 15.55, suspending the Northern Line north of Archway. Two trains stalled behind were authorised to return to East Finchley via the crossover north of East Finchley station into the southbound. An empty northbound train was then sent from East Finchley to 'rescue' the passengers on the defective train by transferring them from one train to the other. The rescue train then returned wrong line with its charge to East Finchley. The Jubilee Line was suspended east of London Bridge from 17.45 to 18.30 (and greatly reduced south/east of Green Park in consequence) because of a defective eastbound train at Canary Wharf. Two trains were stalled to the rear of the defective train throughout.

Good **Friday 22 April** was as follows:

- Incorrect berthing of an engineers train at Baker Street meant that Circle and Hammersmith & City services were unable to start up through the area until 06.15.
- Cancellations on the Piccadilly Line during the afternoon and increasing to 10 in the early evening, because of signal failures at Sudbury Town and Chiswick Park.
- Points failure at West Hampstead (where Jubilee Line trains were being reversed because of engineering work) suspended the line between Finchley Road and West Hampstead from 09.40 to 13.50.
- The warm weather resulted in a number of signalling and points problems from the late-morning onwards, variously at Rickmansworth, Watford and Harrow-on-the-Hill.

On **Saturday 23 April**, points failing at Rayners Lane suspended both services through the area from 10.40 to 11.10. The failure re-occurred at 11.30 and the Piccadilly Line was suspended west of Rayners Lane in consequence. However, at 13.15, both lines were suspended again (Harrow-on-the-Hill/South Harrow – Uxbridge) until 13.45 while repairs were undertaken. The Piccadilly Line service to Uxbridge was again suspended west of Rayners Lane from 15.50 to 18.20 with two signals failing at Ickenham. The hot weather gave way to thunderstorms in the early evening and a lightning strike in the Redbridge area 18.15 resulted in a power surge which affected the Underground in a number of ways from that time:

- Brief loss of Central Line signal control east of Stratford.
- Brief loss of District Line signal control east of Bromley-by-Bow.
- Loss of escalators at Liverpool Street, Monument/Bank, Oxford Circus and London Bridge but with stations remaining open.
- A number of stations closed because of stalled lifts – Tufnell Park (closed until 18.55), Regent's Park (20.35), Russell Square (21.00), Caledonian Road (21.05) and Belsize Park (22.30).

- There were also stalled lifts at Gloucester Road (Piccadilly Line closed until 21.40) and a loss of lifts at Lancaster Gate put the station into 'exit only' mode until 22.40.
- A separate lightning strike at Hanger Lane caused a signal failure between Hanger Lane and Perivale with trains passing through the area under failure conditions until 22.05.
- Another lightning strike between Osterley and Hounslow East at 18.50 resulted in two signals failing and the suspension of the Piccadilly Line west of Northfields until 19.40, with blown fuses having to be replaced.

The through Chesham service was suspended from 12.30 to 13.45 on **Sunday 24 April** because of points failing at Chalfont & Latimer, while a westbound Central Line train became gapped off current approaching Ealing Broadway at 18.15, suspending services between there and North Acton. The train was able to reach the platform edge and its passengers detrained by 18.45. Having fully berthed in the station, services resumed at 18.55.

Russell Square station remained closed until 07.40 on Bank Holiday **Monday 25 April** because of police investigations on the station. The Piccadilly Line was suspended east of Oakwood and the service reduced east of Arnos Grove from 10.10 to 11.00 because of points failing at Cockfosters. A loss of Network Rail signalling control at Wimbledon brought the District Line to a stand west of Putney Bridge from 19.20. One train stalled approaching Wimbledon was authorised to return to Wimbledon Park within 15 minutes. Services resumed to Wimbledon Park at 20.05 and to Wimbledon half an hour later. The day ended with the Metropolitan Line being suspended between Harrow-on-the-Hill and Uxbridge from 21.05 to 22.35, after a southbound train ran over a pushchair which had been thrown from a bridge north of West Harrow.

The Piccadilly Line had a bad day on **Tuesday 26 April**, beginning with a loss of signalling control in the Finsbury Park area at 12.00. The service was suspended between King's Cross and Arnos Grove, and the Victoria Line north of King's Cross. Both lines resumed at 12.50. Then at 14.45 a person under an eastbound train at Covent Garden suspended the Piccadilly Line between Hyde Park Corner and King's Cross until 15.30. Covent Garden then had to close from 19.25 for an hour because of flooding on the emergency spiral stairs. Elsewhere, a fire alarm operated at Charing Cross closed the LU station from 12.50 to 13.45, and a loss of lighting on the southbound platform at Harlesden at 21.20 resulted in southbound Bakerloo trains non-stopping until 22.40. Still with the Bakerloo, services were suspended north of Queen's Park from 19.10 because of a track defect just south of Willesden Junction on the southbound (Up) line. Because the only service north of Willesden was LU's (LO were reversing at Willesden because of engineering work), a 3-train Bakerloo shuttle was implemented between Willesden Junction and Harrow & Wealdstone, reversing off the Up platform at the former. Through services eventually resumed at 23.45.

The Bakerloo Line continued in headline news on **Wednesday 27 April**, with flooding at Elephant & Castle suspending services south of Lambeth North from the start of traffic. Also suspended from the start of traffic were services north of Stonebridge Park because of a (very) late finish to overnight engineering work. Services on this section began at 08.40. Trains were able to run empty between Lambeth North and Elephant & Castle from 12.00 but the Bakerloo Line part of the station remained closed to passengers until 18.45. Meanwhile, a multiple signal failure at Wimbledon suspended the District Line west of Wimbledon Park from 07.15 to 08.10, although services were much reduced west of Parsons Green. Points failing at Ealing Broadway just before 16.00 suspended the Ealing branch of the Central Line until 16.55. One train stalled approaching Ealing Broadway was authorised to return to West Acton, arriving there at 16.30. Another lengthy suspension occurred on the Jubilee Line at 19.15, with an eastbound train becoming 'gapped' off current during a points failing at Stratford, suspending services east of North Greenwich until 21.10. The passengers on the incident train eventually arrived at Stratford at 20.35.

Thursday 28 April was thus:

- Northern Line suspended northbound Morden – Kennington 07.10 to 07.45 – train unable to move off from South Wimbledon.
- Points failing at Praed Street Junction suspended all SSR services through the area from 08.45 for an hour. The aftermath of the incident, with train crew difficulties at Edgware Road, meant the

District Line's Edgware Road service was suspended during the morning and early afternoon 'as required' to give 'breathing space'.

- Northern Line suspended north of Colindale 20.30 to 21.15 – hooligans trackside near Burnt Oak throwing objects at passing trains.

Apart from being the Royal Wedding Day, **Friday 29 April** was remarkable in that there were no notable 'operating' incidents. To prevent overcrowding for the Royal event, Westminster station closed from 08.55 to 12.15 and Green Park 10.20 to 11.00.

Saturday 30 April was as follows:

- Piccadilly Line suspended west of Northfields start until 06.25, when services began to Heathrow T123 and T5. Services around the loop to T4 began at 10.10.
- Central Line suspended Liverpool Street – Leytonstone 07.50 to 09.15 – loss of signalling control at Bethnal Green.
- Jubilee Line suspended north of West Hampstead 11.15 to 11.50 – stalled train at Dollis Hill southbound.