

# UNDERGROUND DIARY

## SEPTEMBER 2011

**Thursday 1 September** was as follows:

- Continuing problems with the new signalling resulted in an under-par Victoria Line in both peaks.
- District Line suspended west of Putney Bridge from 05.25 to 06.20 – points failing at Wimbledon Park.
- Northern Line suspended south of Stockwell 14.25 to 15.15 – person under a southbound train at Tooting Broadway.
- District Line suspended east of Dagenham East 18.05 to 18.35 – person ill on an eastbound train at Elm Park.
- Bakerloo Line suspended south of Piccadilly Circus 17.15 to 17.35 – person ill on a northbound train at Embankment. Trains were effectively held in platforms which resulted in congestion from Kensal Green and south thereof.
- Marylebone LU station closed 18.10 to 18.55 and 19.20 to 20.55 – escalator defects.

**Friday 2 September** began with a SPAD at West Kensington by an eastbound District Line train at 07.20. The train was authorised to set back behind the signal but still incurred a 30-minute suspension, with two trains stalled between stations. Quite how that constitutes 'minor delays' beats your reporter, who happened to be on the eastbound train stalled approaching West Kensington. Yet another 'minor delays' situation (!) occurred with a signal failure at Hanger Lane Junction at 12.35, which resulted in an initial 25-minute stand. In the meantime the southbound 'local' service between Moor Park and Harrow was suspended from 10.40 to 11.30 with a signal failure at Harrow North Junction. A multiple signal failure at Stratford suspended the Jubilee Line east of North Greenwich from 16.45. One train stalled approaching Stratford arrived at 17.10. Services resumed at 18.10. Points failing at Neasden suspended the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park from 16.50, extended to be south of Harrow-on-the-Hill from 17.10. One train was stalled on the approach to Neasden until 17.45. Services resumed to Baker Street at 17.50 and to the City at 18.25.

The only incidents of note on **Saturday 3 September** were three station closures connected with disturbances associated with the English Defence League – King's Cross LU (13.15 to 14.00), Moorgate (14.05 to 14.40) and Mile End (19.15 to 20.10).

Embankment station failed to open until 07.45 on **Sunday 4 September** because of insufficient staff. Because the District Line service was reversing there for weekend engineering work, trains had to detrain at Westminster and run empty to and from Embankment. The Northern and Bakerloo lines non-stopped. A multiple signal failure at Ealing Broadway suspended the District Line west of Ealing Common from 15.35 until 16.50. A person under a northbound Northern Line train in platform 1 at Camden Town suspended the service north of Charing Cross and Euston (City) from 18.00 to 18.35.

The only incident of note on **Monday 5 September** was a points failure at Edgware Road at 15.50, which suspended SSR services through the area until 16.40. Two trains were stalled between stations, that on the eastbound approaching Praed Street Junction was authorised to return to Paddington (Suburban) and that on the westbound approach to Praed Street Junction was authorised to return to Edgware Road.

Eastbound Central Line trains non-stopped West Acton throughout **Tuesday 6 September** because of a number of loose platform nosing stones. Heavy rain caused water ingress north of Swiss Cottage disused station at 16.50 which resulted in a multiple signal failure and a suspension of the service south of Wembley Park. With the number of Metropolitan Line trains queuing northbound and blocking back east of Baker Street, the disruption also seriously affected the Circle and Hammersmith & City lines. Two trains stalled between Baker Street and Finchley Road eventually reached the latter – at 17.25 and 17.40. It took until 21.30 to clear the water and fix the track circuits, from when services resumed as far as Baker Street. In the meantime, passengers were directed to Marylebone, which was swamped with people trying to get onto the timetabled service (*see photo next page*) – unfortunately it just isn't possible to run extra (Chiltern) trains and lengthen the existing ones at such short notice. The Central Line was suspended east of Loughton from 17.15 to 17.45 because of signalling indication problems at Debden. At the same time, flash flooding near Chiswick Park on the Richmond branch suspended the Richmond service until 17.50.



Great Portland Street station closed from 11.40 until 12.15 on **Wednesday 7 September** because of a local power surge. The Bakerloo Line service was suspended north of Queen's Park from 17.20 because of a Network Rail signal failure at Willesden Junction. Although London Overground was able to resume its 20-minute service from 18.30, the Bakerloo Line remained suspended until the close of traffic. An unattended item on a westbound train at Ladbrooke Grove at 21.10 suspended the Hammersmith branch until 21.45.

On **Thursday 8 September**, two signals failing on the northbound Northern Line at Elephant & Castle caused 'severe delays' from the start of traffic, culminating in two separate suspensions (06.55 to 07.15 and 07.40 to 07.55) while engineers went trackside to effect repairs. A person reported trackside east of Ravenscourt Park at 12.05 suspended both the District and Piccadilly lines, the former west of Earl's Court, the latter between Acton Town and Hyde Park Corner. Two of five stalled trains had reached platforms by 12.35 while the other three remained where they were until services resumed at 13.00. The Piccadilly Line's Rayners Lane branch was suspended from 15.45 to 17.20 because of a person found on the track on the westbound approach to Sudbury Town. The third instance of a person trackside occurred at Great Portland Street at 23.35 which resulted in a 20-minute delay and the eastbound platform closed until the end of traffic.

Insufficient staff kept Chalk Farm station closed until 06.20 on **Friday 9 September**. Also at the start of traffic, a signal failure at Angel delayed an engineer's train and early northbound trains via Bank, resulted in a 25-minute suspension from 07.10 while technicians effected repairs. Service recovery was then thwarted with a signal failure at Golders Green at 07.40, causing a 25-minute initial delay.

**Saturday 10 September** began with a signal failure at Marlborough Road disused station at 05.45, which culminated with a suspension south of Wembley Park from 06.50 to 07.55. The City service, however, remained suspended until 08.30, only to be suspended again from 09.05 until 10.05 with a signal failure westbound at King's Cross. Points failing at Praed Street Junction suspended SSR services through the area from 13.30. Three trains were stalled in the Paddington (Circle) area, one on the eastbound approach, which was authorised forward to the platform edge, the other two east of

Paddington, which were authorised to return wrong line in turn towards Paddington, giving the sight of four trains close together! Services resumed in stages, the Circle and Hammersmith & City at 15.10, the Metropolitan Line to the City at 15.30 and the District Line to Edgware Road at 15.55. A person who jumped on the eastbound track at Heathrow Terminal 5 at 14.05 suspended the Piccadilly Line service west of Heathrow T123 until 14.30. Regent's Park station closed from 17.10 to 19.25 because of lift defects. To end the day, Euston LU station closed from 23.05 until 23.55 because of a smell of burning.

**Sunday 11 September** was as follows:

- Jubilee Line suspended east of North Greenwich 09.10 to 09.50 – points failure at Stratford.
- Victoria Line suspended King's Cross 14.55 to 15.50 – signal failure at Finsbury Park.
- Holland Park station closed 15.15 to 17.55 – insufficient staff. However, staff not familiar with lift operation meant that there was no lift service until 19.30.
- Further staff not familiar with lift operation resulted in Queensway station being operated in exit-only mode from 19.05 until the end of traffic.
- Central Line suspended North Acton – Ealing Broadway 20.00 to 20.25 – unattended item on a Central Line train at Ealing Broadway.

Computer signalling problems at Wembley Park delayed the start of the Jubilee Line by 30 minutes on **Monday 12 September**, also having a knock-on effect to other trains entering service from Neasden depot. A southbound Victoria Line train was delayed at Warren Street for 20 minutes from 08.45 after an item of clothing got caught in the train's offside doors. Another signalling problem at Stratford at 11.15 caused a 30-minute suspension of the Jubilee Line east of North Greenwich. Persons trackside at Leytonstone brought the Central Line to a stand in the area from 13.10 until 13.45. As is often the case, nobody was found after a search.

There was nothing of note to report for **Tuesday 13 September** that hasn't been experienced before.

On **Wednesday 14 September**, an unattended item on a Heathrow Express train at Terminal 5, whose platforms are adjacent to the Piccadilly Line's, caused the station to close from 17.30 to 18.25. Regent's Park station closed from 19.35 to 21.40 because of lift defects.

**Thursday 15 September** was a bad day for the Jubilee Line, which began with a points failure at Stanmore at 06.35, suspending services north of Wembley Park until 07.45. Tunnel telephone wires adrift on the southbound Jubilee Line just north of Bond Street suspended the Jubilee Line variously from West Hampstead/Finchley Road to Waterloo from 10.30. The wires had become wrapped around a southbound train between Baker Street and Bond Street, whose passengers had to be detrained via the track to Bond Street, being complete at 12.20. The passengers from a second stalled train behind the incident train were also detrained via the track to Bond Street, having to negotiate the incident train on the way, this being complete by 12.55. Services resumed at 16.35 but were further delayed during the evening peak because of an alleged track defect southbound at Swiss Cottage. The number of trains cancelled averaged 10-15 during the morning and afternoon, but peaked at 31 for the evening rush hour. While this incident was on-going, a person under a westbound District Line train at Mile End at 11.40 suspended the District Line between Bromley-by-Bow and Tower Hill, the Hammersmith & City Line east of Liverpool Street and the Circle Line completely. The passengers from a westbound train stalled approaching Mile End were detrained via the track to the station, this being complete by 13.05. In the meanwhile, the area of suspension was extended from Bromley-by-Bow to Barking (westbound) and Upney (eastbound) from 12.00 to 12.50 because of points failing at East Ham. Through services between Bromley-by-Bow and Tower Hill resumed at 13.40.

There were more woes for the Jubilee Line on **Friday 16 September**, with a points failure at Willesden Green at 09.00, suspending the service between West Hampstead and Wembley Park until 12.10. A passenger assault on the northbound Northern Line platform at Leicester Square resulted in Northern Line trains non stopping from 23.20 until the end of traffic.

**Saturday 17 September** was as good as uneventful.

The only notable incident on **Sunday 18 September** was a train with smoke coming from underneath it on the westbound at Bethnal Green. The service was suspended between Leytonstone and Liverpool Street from 21.35 to 22.15, with the offending train put away in British Museum siding.

On **Monday 19 September** a points failure at Brixton suspended the Victoria Line south of Victoria from 07.20 until 07.55. A multiple points failure at Stanmore suspended the Jubilee Line north of

Wembley Park from 11.25. The area of suspension was reduced to be north of Canons Park from 11.50 until the fault was fixed at 12.45. Holloway Road station closed from 13.15 for an hour because of lift defects. Persons trackside at Northwick Park at 23.45 suspended services through the area – two people were reported as being apprehended. This resulted in a very late finish to Metropolitan Line services. The Jubilee Line ended Monday's traffic day (in the early hours of Tuesday) with a train stalled entering Stanmore sidings at 00.15, effectively suspending the service north of Wembley Park until the end of traffic. The offending train reached the sidings at 02.00 with the last train stabling at Stanmore at 02.55.

**Tuesday 20 September** was thus:

- Jubilee Line delayed by various degrees during the afternoon and evening peak because of signalling problems at West Ham and Stratford. Although the initial delay at 15.25 was 20 minutes, other delays occurred, varying between 25 and 30 minutes. Amazingly, there appeared to be no 'suspension' message, nor any trains recorded as being cancelled!
- The Bakerloo Line side of Paddington LU station closed from 17.30 to 19.00 because of escalator defects.
- A loss of signalling control at Farringdon suspended the SSR services through the area from 22.45 until 23.20.

The Jubilee Line began **Wednesday 21 September** with a signal failure at Wembley Park from 06.45. The initial delay was 25 minutes but the failure continued intermittently throughout the morning with individual delays of up to 30 minutes. Again, no trains were recorded as being cancelled for the failure and no 'suspension' could be found on the information screens. Another incident without apparent suspension information being available occurred at Vauxhall at 08.00 with a defective northbound train. A 35-minute stand is surely a 'suspension' in anybody's language?

**Thursday 22 September** belonged to the Piccadilly Line. A temporary 5mph speed restriction on the eastbound at King's Cross resulted in a number of cancellations throughout the day to give some breathing space in the timetable. Points failing at Cockfosters at 19.50 suspended the Piccadilly Line east of Oakwood from 19.50 until 20.55, while a person ill on a westbound train at South Kensington at 23.40 resulted in a 35-minute stand. It was too late in the day to reverse trains either side of the incident because of crewing issues, so the westbound service was held in platforms to the rear until clear at 00.15.

A defective signalling cable and signal failure at Moor Park resulted in southbound Metropolitan Line trains from Rickmansworth being diverted via the southbound local line from the start of traffic on **Friday 23 September**, leaving Chiltern Railways services only to pass through the failure. Normal signalling was restored at 10.00 after an 800 metre length of cable had been replaced. A local power failure caused Turnpike Lane and Southgate stations to close at 21.50, reopening at 22.25 and 22.10 respectively.

**Saturday 24 September** was as follows:

- 30-minute delay to northbound Northern Line at Kennington from 05.45 – signal failure.
- Platform 1 at Brixton out of use all day – broken rail. Service suspended south of Victoria 14.50 to 15.10 for track inspection.
- Edgware Road branch of the District Line suspended 06.25 to 07.05 – points failure at Triangle sidings.

On **Sunday 25 September**, a SPAD by a Chiltern Railways train exiting No.34 (unelectrified) siding at Amersham (which was reversing south to north) at 10.45 resulted in a 30-minute delay but to Chiltern only. The rest of the day was taken up with station lift problems at Regent's Park (closed 10.40 to 12.40), Tufnell Park (18.50 to 21.50) and the Piccadilly Line side of Gloucester Road (22.15 to 22.35 and 23.20 to the close of traffic).

The Jubilee Line began **Tuesday 26 September** with the on-going signalling problems at Neasden – there was a 20-minute southbound delay just after 06.00. A cable fire in the westbound tunnel east of Bounds Green resulted in a loss of signal control at the east end of the Piccadilly Line, with the service suspended east of King's Cross. Two stalled trains reached Arnos Grove by 10.55. Services resumed at 11.35. The Central Line was suspended between Hainault and Newbury Park from 10.40 for an hour, following a bridge strike earlier at Fairlop (*photo below*). The force of the collision turned the lorry onto its side and became wedged in one of the bridge abutments.



The District Line had a bizarre morning on **Tuesday 27 September**. A dislodged cable at Victoria was hanging down too close to the roof of eastbound trains and following congestion because of a temporary speed restriction (and 'severe delays') it was decided to try and secure it. This resulted in engineers putting ladders up against the side of an eastbound train and accessing the errant cable via the roof! A second attempt at securing the cable was necessary later in the morning as it began to 'sag' once again. The service was 'held' from 07.55 to 08.10 and again from 11.30 to 11.50. Another instance of tunnel telephone wires coming adrift occurred at Marlborough Road disused station on the northbound at 22.35, suspending the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park until 23.30 – fortunately they did not get wrapped round a passing train this time!

**Wednesday 28 September** was thus:

- Bakerloo Line suspended north of Queen's Park 07.55 to 08.50 and Queen's Park – Willesden Junction from then until 10.50. Lorry hit wall of retail premises adjacent to the northbound line north of Queen's Park, which had to be demolished before services could resume.
- Uxbridge branch of the Piccadilly Line suspended 08.40 to 10.00 – signal failure at Hanger Lane Junction with incident (Piccadilly Line) train diverted to Ealing Broadway.
- Central Line suspended Hainault – Leytonstone outer rail 10.40 to 12.20 – person under a westbound train at Gants Hill. The incident train was the Track Recording Train and one westbound passenger train was stalled to the rear of Gants Hill until 11.50.
- Holborn station closed 18.30 to 20.10 – escalator defects.
- Hendon Central station closed 19.30 to 20.55 – local power failure.
- Tufnell Park station closed 20.15 to 22.15 – lift defects.
- Problems with the new signalling at Wembley Park caused an initial 25-minute delay to the Jubilee Line from 21.50, with the problems continuing for the rest of the evening and affecting return traffic from the O2.

These incidents were only a selection of several more on this day.

**On Thursday 29 September** –

- Smoke from an escalator machine room closed Euston LU station from 08.35 to 09.25.

- Points failing at Wembley Park suspended the Jubilee Line north of Neasden from 14.25 until 15.15.
- District Line suspended east of Barking 17.05 to 17.45 – defective eastbound train at Dagenham Heathway.
- Northbound Bakerloo Line trains non-stopped Baker Street from 21.25 to 22.30 – passenger ill on platform.

Points failing at Uxbridge from 11.20 suspended the Metropolitan Line west of Ruislip and the Piccadilly Line west of Rayners Lane on **Friday 30 September**. The Metropolitan Line resumed to Uxbridge at 12.25 with only two platforms available, the Piccadilly Line to Ruislip from 14.30 and to Uxbridge at 15.10. The day ended with points failing at Farringdon at 23.50, suspending all services through the area for an hour, but effectively until the close of traffic.