

FROM THE PAPERS

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AUTUMN 2011 SYDENHAM SOCIETY NEWS – Extending the Bakerloo Line further into south-east London has for many years been an aspiration of transport planners. Now for the first time, Network Rail has considered the options and has chosen the preferred route. This route takes the line from Elephant & Castle via New Cross Gate to Lewisham and Catford and then goes along the current main line route to Hayes via Lower Sydenham. Of course, announcing this preferred route is only the first step. The route has to gain acceptance from local authorities, community and civic groups in Lewisham and Bromley. The plan then has to go through lengthy procedures within central government to achieve approval and the all-important finance. But having announced a preferred route, it would be unlikely that another totally different route would then take place.

27.09.11 THE TIMES – The UK civil engineering firm Halcrow has been bought out by American rival CH2M Hill. Halcrow has been on most of the major civil engineering schemes in recent years – currently Crossrail and in the past the Channel Tunnel rail link. During WW2 its founder Sir William Halcrow was seconded to the War Cabinet as its engineering expert. As well construction the network tunnels under Whitehall the company worked on eight deep level air raid shelters around the capital, originally to house government workers, but later opened to the public as bombing intensified. The plan was that they might be linked by tunnels that could run a new railway in peacetime.

28.09.11 METRO – A 180m² green wall will be installed just outside Edgware Road(Bakerloo) station in November to help trap harmful particulate matter pollution (PM10) from passing traffic. Around 500 trees will also be planted along busy roads. The trial of dust-suppressant technology, which aims to reduce PM10 by preventing dust recirculation in the air, will continue at Victoria Embankment, Marylebone Road and Park Lane.

OCTOBER 2011 ONGAR NEWS – Epping & Ongar Railway work teams have been busy on a number of ongoing restoration projects including Ongar signal box (including lever frame) and track and buildings at North Weald. Rolling stock is also receiving attention including a Brake Open Second, 117 DMU and diesel electric unit 205205. The newly arrived Class 25 D7523 has been a welcome addition for use on engineering and work trains as testing of rolling stock braking systems.

29.10.11 METRO – Almost 80% of the 18,000 Londoners and local businesses, when consulted, were 80% in favour of the change on the District Line due in December, when the service to Kensington Olympia is to be withdrawn on Mondays to Fridays. The service will continue on weekends and during major weekday events at Olympia. TfL said the closure will provide capacity for an extra 4,000 travellers every morning on the Wimbledon branch and for 800 more on the Ealing Broadway services during the evening peak, as well as reducing delays across the whole line.

03.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Underground drivers are set to earn £52,300 a year in basic pay in a 4 year deal which will increase their wages by £10,000 by 2015. This agreement does not include a no-strike guarantee. The 3,200 drivers work a 35-hour week excluding meal breaks. The agreement covers all three unions, the RMT ASLEF and TSSA. In a separate deal, drivers will also be paid up to £1,200 extra for working and extra duties during the Olympic Games. Underground bosses said the "ground breaking" deal offered the "prospect" of – but would not guarantee – no strike action, or the threat of strikes, over pay until at least 2015.

03.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Kensington Olympia Underground station will be closed on Mondays to Fridays from December. TfL's decision to end the District Line service from Earl's Court come despite strong resistance from event organisers who said the move would "seriously undermine" the exhibitions and events industry in west London.

05.10.11 METRO – Guide dogs are now allowed on escalators on the TfL network. Visually impaired and disabled people with trained assistance dogs will be able to use moving escalators legally for the first time on the Underground, DLR and London Overground. TfL has worked with Guide Dogs for the Blind Association to devise a training course that means an outdated byelaw can be updated to allow all trained assistance and police dogs to use moving escalators.

06.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Coca Cola has been accused of breaking the “Olympic spirit” over its plans to travel to the Games using VIP coaches instead of public transport. The soft drinks giant has booked 300 rooms at the Langham Hotel. Residents’ parking will be suspended around the hotel to make way for coaches taking employees and their guests to Stratford, using the dedicated Olympic road lanes, instead of using the adjacent Oxford Circus station and the Central Line direct to Stratford – significantly quicker than the road trip.

06.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Underground drivers launched a ballot for industrial action across the network only days after being offered a £52,000 pay deal. The RMT union is consulting its driver members over claims that staff cuts are putting passengers at risk. Union leaders claim that new procedures for reversing a train, faults in platform camera systems and the consequences of “massive reductions” in staff are “unacceptable and potentially dangerous”. The move threatens disruption across all Underground lines, and comes in a week that staff received a 5% pay rise. All 15,000 TfL staff have signed up to a 4 year deal. Underground bosses said the deal “offers stability and the prospect of no industrial action over pay until at least 2015”.

06.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – One of the world’s biggest airlines, Emirates, is set to start “flying” passengers across the Thames in a deal that will see its brand name appear on every London Tube map. Emirates is revealed as the backer of Mayor Boris Johnson’s cable car project, which will link the O₂ Arena with the Excel Exhibition Centre. As part of the £36m, 10 year deal, Emirates will see its branding on all future versions of the Tube map design. Two new stations will be added to future maps – Emirates Greenwich Peninsular for the O₂ and Emirates Royal Docks for the Excel. The cable car’s “flight path” across the Thames will also be depicted on the maps in bright “Emirates red”. The project, which TfL says could be completed by next summer, will have 34 gondolas carrying 2,500 passengers per hour, about 160 feet above the river, will run every 30 seconds and take 5 minutes.

06.10.11 METRO – The upgrade of the Overground network in north London has been named project of the year at the Rail Awards 2011. The 3 year £550m upgrade means passengers are now benefiting from more frequent services, longer platforms, increased capacity and a new fleet of longer air-conditioned trains. This part of London Overground is a vital 2012 Games rail route, connecting visitors to the Olympic Park and other transport interchanges.

11.10.11 METRO - The LT Museum is looking for old and used travel tickets to feature in their upcoming exhibition “Mind the Map; Inspiring art design and cartography”, which opens in 2012. This includes tickets for air travel, boat, bus, train and more. The exhibition will explore the theme of journeys and includes newly commissioned artworks alongside the Museum’s historic map collection. The tickets will be used to create a large scale world map, and include the role of tickets as a memory or symbolic representation of a journey. Used tickets from as many types of travel, in various colours and from many countries and time spans would be welcome.

12.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Londoners were urged to get off the Underground and walk instead to improve their health. Public Health minister Anne Milton appealed to commuters to adopt healthier journeys to work as part of Britain’s battle against obesity. “The idea is to get off the bus or the Tube a couple of stops early and walk. You can build up slowly, 10 minutes at a time, until you are getting your 150 active minutes a week rather than taking the Tube or the bus”. The Government has been criticised for being too close to the food industry as the weight crisis worsens.

12.10.11 METRO – TfL is reminding its passengers to keep hold of their possessions while on Underground platforms, because retrieving a mobile phone from the tracks is not as straightforward as it seems. Underground staff cannot recover items without putting themselves at risk as the tracks are electrified and there is only a three minute gap between trains. If the current were switched off, trains on the line could not run and the result would be serious disruption to the service. Instead there are specific procedures in place which means lost items must remain where they are until they can be recovered safely. Anyone who does lose an item must alert a member of staff. The station supervisor will confirm where the object is and will log the incident. The tracks are then searched overnight and the owner would be contacted the following day if the item is recovered.

13.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Mayor Boris Johnson has been urged to reconsider the closure of the District Line service which resident and businesses say will undermine the exhibitions and events industry in west London. Campaigners claim the decision to close the Earl’s Court to Kensington Olympia during the week is motivated by cost cutting rather than improving the service.

In a document obtained by the campaigners under the Freedom of Information Act, LU claims that the move would save £890,000 a year, and proves the decision was “taken long before the public knew about the plan”. This section of the District Line will continue to operate at weekends and during major weekday events at the exhibition centre.

13.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Few commuters have anything good to say about the Circle Line. But for entrepreneur Alan Rosenthal, the tedium of yet another delay on the line 3 years ago, inspired *Stewed!*, his ready meals business that now brings in revenues of £1m a year. “I was on a miserable commute and started desperately trying to think of an idea to start my own business. I’d always been a foodie, and began thinking about the convenience food market”. That’s when he thought up the idea of making one-pot stews for buyers to heat and eat at home.

14.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Blind people are being asked to stay away from London’s busiest Underground station, Victoria, between 15.30 and 19.30 on weekday rush hours due to LU staff being unable to give assistance to VIP (visually impaired people). Campaigners and Underground unions said the restrictions amounted to a ban on blind people, and blamed staff cuts for the decision. LU’s Chief Operating Officer said, “We are completely committed to assisting our customers, whatever their needs, and the arrangements we have put in place at Victoria are purely temporary as we refurbish the escalators”.

14.10.11 METRO – A decision to close any section of an Underground line is not taken lightly. There is a lengthy process involved to ensure disruption to passengers is kept to a minimum. LU’s Director of Infrastructure explains, “When organising closures we work closely with the likes of London Buses, DLR and train companies to ensure there are suitable travel alternatives. Factors taken into account include its potential impact on other services, the availability of alternatives (replacement buses) and the need to provide sufficient transport options during major events”.

14.10.11 THE TIMES – This week the tabloids have been full of pictures of pop star Rihanna on the Jubilee Line, incongruously taking the Underground to the first of her 10-night, sell out run at the O₂ Arena, surrounded by astonished commuters taking her picture on their mobiles.

17.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – An Underground map made of cake went on show at St. Pancras station to mark National Baking Week. Measuring 7ft by 7ft, it has a cupcake St. Paul’s, a London Pie, and a Marble Cake Arch. It was overseen by Great British Bake Off finalist Ruth Clemens.

17.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – As Prime Minister, David Cameron is one of the most recognisable figures in Britain, but was surprised when he tried to speak to a passenger on the Underground – and the woman did not know who he was. Mr. Cameron complimented a commuter on her baby as he travelled on the Jubilee Line. The woman had to ask her husband who was the strange man passing comment on her daughter. When her husband told her that the man was the Prime Minister, she apologised that she had not recognised him. As an actress appearing in eight Bollywood films, she told the Prime Minister that politicians in India would never travel on public transport.

17.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Admiral Lord West, former First Sea Lord and Labour security minister, expressed “horror” at youngsters’ lack of knowledge of the armed services in a chance encounter on the Underground. While travelling to St. Paul’s Cathedral in full uniform, he was confronted by a group of schoolchildren, when one boy asked him what he did. The Admiral said “I’m in the Navy”, to which the boy replied “What is the Navy?”. One other passenger said it was amazing that kids did not know what the Navy was, and another suggested that the Admiral should spend his days travelling on the Circle Line giving informative lectures on military history.

17.10.11 METRO – The first Underground escalator was unveiled 100 years ago this month at Earl’s Court station. More than 550,000 people flocked to the station just to travel on it. Owing to a nervous public at the time, a clerk for the London Electric Railway, Bumper Harris, who had a wooden leg, was asked to test the escalator. If he experienced no problems, then people would be encouraged to use this new mode of transport. Unfortunately, the fashions of the day caused a few minor teething problems, especially for women, with reports of nine torn dresses. Since Bumper’s first trip, more than 500 escalators have been installed across the Underground network.

18.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – TfL have devised a plan to prevent the Underground’s most notorious line causing chaos during the Olympics – they are telling ticket holders not to use the Jubilee Line, even if their train is heading directly to Stratford for the Olympic Park. TfL will use tannoys and official transport advice to get visitors to switch to the Central Line, though they admit

regular commuters will not follow the advice. TfL has also identified Paddington as a major potential congestion spot for rail passengers and arrivals from Heathrow, and will advise travellers to leave the station and walk to Lancaster Gate station.

19.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – London business chiefs have set up a panel called London First to explore building a new rail link – dubbed Crossrail 2 – beneath the capital. Former Transport Secretary Lord Adonis will lead the group in assessing plans to connect Chelsea and Hackney, amid fears that the Tube will be swamped by a future population boom, and by the extra commuters who will pour into the capital using high speed rail. London First said, "We need to start planning for the next generation of improvements now".

19.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Living near the Underground is a priority for many Londoners who want a convenient commute to work. Homes within a 5-10 minute walk of an Underground station are, on average, the most expensive in an area. Prices drop significantly for homes 15 minutes' walk and decline steadily thereafter. The capital's Underground lines are the veins of the city's property map, and are an obvious starting point for homebuyers. One transport quirk is that only 30 of London's 275 Underground stations are south of the river. The only line that goes deep into south London is the Northern Line that is heavily used by young Londoners because it connects cheaper locations both north and south of the river, with the main employment centres of the West End and the City.

19.10.11 THE TIMES – Going Underground to *avoid* publicity? Most Londoners know that the Underground is usually the easiest way to get about. Every now and then, a few celebrities and government hotshots choose to take the Underground with the "every day folk" to prove that they are just like us. Of course, if they *were* just like us, they would know not to break one of the unwritten rules of Oyster card carriers; do not attempt conversation. In recent years the following have been seen on the Underground network? David Cameron, Richard Branson, Rihanna, The Queen, Robert Pattinson, Tony Blair, Nick Clegg, John Prescott, Chris Martin and Gwyneth Paltrow.

19.10.11 METRO – The walls of the subway at Leytonstone Underground station are lined by 17 mosaics are a tribute to Alfred Hitchcock whose 60 year career changed the face of cinema. Unveiled in 2001, by Waltham Forest Council, the tiled murals cover the length of director's career, including *To Catch a Thief*, *The Wrong Man*, *Vertigo*, *Psycho*, *North by Northwest* and *The Birds*. For eagle-eyed locals a further treat awaits. Hidden among the mosaic shards, like a Hitchcock cameo, are famous Leytonstone land marks including The Green Man Pub and St. John's Church. After a national competition, Greenwich Mural Workshop was chosen to carry out the work.

19.10.11 METRO – Work on three 42 year old escalators at Victoria station has been completed 3 months ahead of schedule. Included among these is the second most used escalator in the world – used by 21 million passengers each year.

20.10.11 METRO – Northern Line trains between Camden Town and High Barnet/Mill Hill East will start later on most Sundays until November next year. To allow the Northern Line upgrade, the majority of trains will begin running at about 08.30. The Northern Line upgrade which begins this month includes the installation and commissioning of a new signalling system.

21.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Mayor Boris Johnson was today urged to "sort out" Underground delays as commuters were warned to expect continued disruption. This week is believed to have been the worst this year on the Underground. Tens of thousands of commuters have suffered long delays and RMT leader Bob Crow said the problems could continue in the run up to the Olympics. But the Mayor said the Underground had "significantly improved" in the past year and it will continue to get better as the upgrade programmed progresses. Today there were delays on the Circle, Hammersmith & City, Metropolitan and Piccadilly lines.

24.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Driverless Underground trains could operate across the network within 10 years, according to a TfL discussion paper. It reveals LU bosses are considering trains that are fully automatic and staffed by an attendant instead of a driver. The Central, Victoria and Jubilee lines already run in semi-automatic role and little practical change is needed to operate without a driver. The same paper also raises the prospect that almost every passenger will pay for their journeys using their bank cards instead of Oyster cards. This move will also mean all but 30 of 258 ticket office closures and the loss of more than 1,500 jobs. The paper indicated that £2billion could be saved by 2018. The document is described by RMT union leader Bob Crow as a "blueprint for jobs and safety carnage". LU Managing Director Mike Brown said, "This plan delivers taxpayer value

through a significant reduction of operations. The Tube is now carrying 1.1 billion passengers a year. Londoners want a modern, safe, economical and efficient Underground. This paper contains some suggestions as to how this might be achieved”.

27.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – Hundreds of thousands of Underground passengers suffered hours of delays after a man wandered onto the tracks at Embankment station. Passengers screamed as the driver of a westbound District Line train saw the man at the last moment and braked to avoid hitting him. The man suffered abrasions and bruises. All Circle Line services were withdrawn and the District suspended between Aldgate East and South Kensington. Hammersmith & City Line trains also suffered disruption because of the knock on effect. Stalled trains on the Jubilee and Victoria lines added to the chaos.

27.10.11 METRO – Underground drivers will refuse to follow new safety guidelines from tomorrow, claiming they put passengers at risk. The RMT union said about 1,500 drivers will instead use ‘proven’ safety procedures indefinitely. New measures have been in place for several weeks, including the controversial procedure of allowing drivers to override the system that halts the train if the doors are obstructed and then proceed after a visual check. LU boss Howard Collins insisted the new measures would not ‘impact on our high safety standards’ and claimed the workload of the drivers would be cut and delays reduced.

27.10.11 METRO – A LU bridge replacement project has won a top prize at the British Construction Industry Awards. An 80-year old bridge between Ravenscourt Park and Hammersmith was removed and replaced over one weekend. The new 90-tonne steel bridge unit brought in from Wales, using lifting machines to complete the job, brought in from Holland.

27.10.11 METRO – A new selection from *Poems on the Underground* commemorates lives lost in the war and continuing quest for peace. To coincide with the sale of poppies ahead of Remembrance Day, six war-themed poems are now on display on Underground trains across the network.

31.10.11 EVENING STANDARD – A film poster depicting a London girl gang bludgeoning the Prime Minister with a metal pole, has been banned by LU bosses, who fear it is too violent and could provoke anti-social behaviour. Ex-rapper Ashley Walters heads the cast of *SKET* – slang for a prostitute – a gritty thriller about gangland. The poster depicts characters from the film setting upon David Cameron. It features the tag line, “So Mr. Cameron, do you still want to Hug a Hoodie?”.

Amanda Day