

UNDERGROUND DIARY

DECEMBER 2012

On **Saturday 1 December** the Northern Line was suspended north of Archway from 18.20 to 19.00 because of a defect on points just north of East Finchley. Several other minor incidents were not significant enough to be included here.

Sunday 2 December may be summarised thus:

- Westbound Piccadilly Line from Cockfosters to King's Cross began 35 minutes late because of incomplete work on points at Arnos Grove.
- A combination of work on the track at Blackfriars and traction current problems resulted in a 35-minute late start to the District and Circle lines through the central area.
- Victoria Line suspended between Highbury & Islington and Seven Sisters from 08.00 – report of smoke in the tunnel near Netherton Road. The suspension was widened to be north of King's Cross from 08.40 because of points failing at Highbury & Islington which trapped two trains, both on the northbound approach to Highbury. These were clear of passengers at 09.35 (first train) and 09.45 (second). Services resumed at 10.40.
- Person reported on track at Ealing Broadway at 10.15 – District Line suspended Turnham Green – Ealing and Piccadilly Line Acton Town – Uxbridge. Following a manual search and also a helicopter search, nothing was found and services resumed at 11.25.
- Olympia branch service suspended 17.30 to 18.25 – signal failure at Olympia.

Monday 3 December was another mixed bag, with the District Line having signal failures at Ealing Common and Barking, both in the morning, and a Network Rail signal failure at East Putney during the evening. This last failure began at 18.45, with the service suspended west of Putney Bridge from 20.35 until 21.40 while repairs were effected. The Jubilee Line was at a stand between 08.00 to 08.25 because of combination of a person ill on an eastbound train at Southwark and traction current discharge between Canada Water and North Greenwich. Kilburn Park station closed from 18.40 to 19.20 because of escalator defects.

On **Tuesday 4 December** a track fire in the platform 4 at Kennington suspended the southbound City service from 09.20 to 09.40, with other trains non-stopping. A multiple signal failure between Ruislip and Ruislip siding from 13.00 suspended the Metropolitan Line west of Rayners Lane and the Piccadilly Line west of South Harrow. One westbound Metropolitan Line train stalled approaching Ruislip was authorised to return to Ruislip Manor, while one westbound Piccadilly Line train stalled west of Ruislip was routed with passengers into Ruislip siding and returned eastbound to Ruislip station. The Metropolitan Line resumed at 14.00 and Piccadilly Line at 14.40. At 18.55 the signal main current was briefly lost between Balham and Morden. Apart from an initial 10-minute service delay, the consequential loss of local power to the escalators at South Wimbledon required the station to close until 22.00. The day ended (in the early hours of 5 December but within the traffic day of 4 December) with the home signal failing at Ealing Broadway at 01.15. One train was stalled at the signal until 02.05 and the last two trains behind were cancelled between Ealing Common and Ealing Broadway.

The freezing weather (and a little snow) caused problems on **Wednesday 5 December**, and instead of 'adverse weather' it became 'ice on the rails'. However, before those problems the Metropolitan and Jubilee lines started up half an hour late because of incomplete work on points at Neasden. The weather then disrupted services, as follows:

- Two trains stalled between Sudbury Town and Sudbury Hill from 06.30 to 07.15.
- A stalled Up (southbound) London Overground train at Kenton from 06.45 suspended the Bakerloo Line north of Stonebridge Park until 07.35.
- Stalled eastbound Central Line train between Debden and Theydon Bois. Central Line suspended east of Debden from 06.10 to 06.50. A stalled westbound train at Northolt at 06.50 suspended the West Ruislip branch of the Central Line until 07.45.

In the afternoon, a southbound train entering service from Golders Green depot became 'gapped' off current at 16.40, suspending the Edgware branch for 25 minutes. A fire close by the Piccadilly Line west of Hatton Cross suspended the Piccadilly Line west of Hounslow Central from 19.15 until 20.30 but with a reduced service between there and Northfields in consequence. The District and Circle

lines were suspended through South Kensington from 21.15 to 22.00 because of smoke from under an inner rail Circle Line train. The District Line, trying to recover from this incident, continued to be disrupted by a signal failure at Putney Bridge. This culminated in a suspension west of Parsons Green from midnight until 00.40. Prior to this at 16.25, a loss of the signal main at Chalfont & Latimer suspended the Metropolitan Line north of Rickmansworth. Three trains were stalled – one approaching Chalfont & Latimer northbound was authorised to return to Chorleywood, one approaching Chalfont & Latimer on the Chesham single line was authorised to return to Chesham, while an Up (southbound) Chiltern was authorised to return to Amersham encountered a points failure there, which delayed its arrival until 17.55. There was a brief resumption of services to Amersham from 20.00 but with several signals failing again from 20.30, it continued to be suspended until 21.55, from when a limited service was provided for the rest of the day. The Chesham service remained suspended until the close of traffic.

Thursday 6 December began with a delayed start to the Wimbledon branch because of incomplete work on signalling at East Putney. However, a previous failure re-occurred at 06.35, resulting in a reduced service until the fault was fixed at 08.15. Services through Harrow-on-the-Hill came to a stand from 09.15 to 09.40 when a northbound train stalled approaching the station – a temporary 5mph speed restriction caused the train to become ‘gapped’ off current. Hooliganism on an eastbound Metropolitan Line train at Ickenham at 18.10 caused a 20-minute delay while the police attended. Escalator defects closed Marylebone LU station from 19.15 to 19.45.

The Bakerloo Line part of Paddington station became ‘exit only’ from 07.30 to 08.40 on **Friday 7 December** because of escalator defects, while a signal failure at Leyton resulted in seven cancellations on the Central Line at midday. A signal track circuit failure at Watford from 12.45 saw all trains detrain at Croxley and reverse via the sidings at Watford with a taxi service provided between the two stations. Services resumed to Watford at 14.40. At 23.50 a west/northbound Metropolitan Line train stalled across Baker Street Junction whilst entering platform 2. Services were suspended south of Wembley Park and between Edgware Road and Barking, while the Circle Line was suspended throughout. Four trains were stalled, two eastbound trains approaching Baker Street (clear of passengers at 00.30 and 01.00), one westbound approaching Baker Street (clear of passengers at 00.55) and one approaching Great Portland Street (clear at 00.50). The train eventually arrived in platform 2 at 01.40, following which the remaining trains in the area were cleared (empty eastbound because of closed stations – by then insufficient staff), last services north of Baker Street being just short of two hours late.

Saturday 8 December was uneventful until just before the close of traffic, actually in the early hours of Sunday morning. At 00.50 an eastbound Piccadilly Line train stalled entering the east sidings at Acton Town, having become ‘gapped’ off current. Because of safety arrangements with last trains, the last westbound Ealing and Uxbridge trains had to be held to maintain correct running order. One train stalled on the approach to Acton Town was authorised to return to Ealing Common, arriving with its handful of passengers at 01.50. Once the offending train was in the sidings, the last two trains departed to their respective destinations just after 03.00.

Sunday 9 December began with platform edge door problems at Waterloo at the start of traffic, with Jubilee Line trains non-stopping in both directions for varying periods of time until 11.55 while the problem was diagnosed and then fixed. A points failure at Tower Hill from 07.15 suspended the District Line between Mansion House and Whitechapel and also the inner rail Circle Line. One train stalled approaching Tower Hill was authorised to return to Monument, arriving at 07.40. The District Line resumed at 08.55, the Circle Line half an hour later with the bay platform at Tower Hill out of use for the rest of the day. Scheduled Tower Hill reversers were terminated at Mansion House instead.

An intermittent signal failure on the southbound approach to Lambeth North from 09.20 on **Monday 10 December** caused some ‘delays’ to the Bakerloo Line throughout the day – the fault wasn’t fixed until the late evening, although (apparently) there were no consequential cancellations. Points failing at Rayners Lane from 19.45 suspended the Uxbridge branch of the Metropolitan Line and the Piccadilly Line west of South Harrow, both until 20.35. One eastbound train was stalled between Eastcote and Rayners Lane, which was authorised back to the former, arriving at 20.20. A signal failure at Heathrow T123 suspended the Piccadilly Line between there and Terminal 5 from 22.30 for an hour.

Tuesday 11 December was as follows:

- Bakerloo Line suspended south of Paddington from start of traffic until 06.45 – broken rail Marylebone southbound.
- Tottenham Court Road station closed 16.55 to 17.50 – smoke reported on the Northern Line platforms.
- Eastbound Central Line trains non-stopped Oxford Circus 17.10 to 17.45 – passenger ill on platform.
- Clapham South station closed 19.25 to 22.00 – escalator defects.
- Metropolitan Line suspended Northwood – Watford and north of Harrow on the ‘main’ lines from 20.15 – points failing at Watford East Junction which in turn affected signalling at the South and North junctions. An attempt to provide a decent taxi service was thwarted with both local firms and black cabs unable to assist. Services resumed at 22.45.

Wednesday 12 December began with stock availability issues on the Metropolitan Line in Neasden depot, said to be frozen pressure switches on S Stock. Some 10 trains were cancelled by 06.00, which represented one third of the service. As the morning progressed the situation gradually improved. Also in trouble was the Northern Line, which lost signalling control at High Barnet from 06.05, suspending the service north of Finchley Central until 06.50. As this incident closed two signals failed between Woodside Park and West Finchley from 07.00, preventing a swift return to timetable. Clear signals were obtained just after 08.00 after a frozen trainstop had been de-iced. In the meantime, a signal failure at Finchley Central from 07.15 suspended the service to and from Mill Hill East. Yet another frozen trainstop was attended to with normal signalling from 08.25. In the same vicinity, but on the Piccadilly Line, frozen trainstop issues at Arnos Grove from 07.25 resulted in a thinning of the westbound service and 11 trains cancelled for the morning peak. Highbury & Islington station closed from 10.15 until 11.00 because of a defect on the fire control panel. The traffic day ended (in the early hours of Thursday) with a person under a northbound Bakerloo Line train at Maida Vale at 00.20. This suspended the northbound service until the close of traffic with the incident train moving off at 02.00, followed by the last three (empty) trains.

An eastbound Central Line train lost ATO/ATP east of Leyton just after 07.30 on **Thursday 13 December** and could only get movement in restricted manual. The train moved off from Leytonstone after a 25-minute delay. A further 20-minute delay occurred at Northolt at 10.00 with points failing. The consequential information being given out following these two incidents was at definite odds with the “good service” being proclaimed at West Ruislip at 10.20, with no trains around for some time! A smell of smoke between Paddington and Warwick Avenue at 15.15 suspended the Bakerloo Line throughout the LU section until 16.05. Continuing problems with the crossover at Piccadilly Circus (replaced in 2009) prevented reversing north to south there.

At 09.50 on **Friday 14 December** a southbound Jubilee Line train became ‘gapped’ off current as it approached Neasden, suspending the service between Wembley Park and Willesden Green. This was the only train stalled between stations and it was necessary to detrain passengers via the track to Neasden station, which also suspended the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park. Once this had been completed at 10.55 the train was reversed and sent (in slow manual) via Wembley Park to Neasden depot, arriving at 12.10. In the meanwhile the first southbound train through from Wembley Park then stalled at 11.55 and this was put into depot from Neasden station. Services resumed at 12.40. At 19.50 a person under a northbound train at Finchley Road suspended the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park. Two trains were stalled for roundly an hour, one at Swiss Cottage disused station and another at Marlborough Road disused station. Because of the number of Metropolitan Line trains in the City section, and because they couldn’t go north of Baker Street, these trains had to shuttle between Baker Street platform 6 and Moorgate/Aldgate, in turn causing delays to the Circle and Hammersmith services. Services resumed at 21.10 but remained under par for the rest of the evening.

Although **Saturday 15 December** was a trouble-free day operationally, there were a number of trains cancelled because of Train Operator non-availability, the Northern, Central, Metropolitan and C&H taking the brunt of them.

The only excursion from the norm on **Sunday 16 December** was a Central Line train ‘gapped’ off current at Hainault at 21.20, which suspended the inner rail service between Newbury Park and Woodford until clear at 22.25.

There were two late starts on **Monday 17 December**. Traction current supply problems meant that the Jubilee Line was suspended on 'the extension' until 05.55, while a rail defect between Vauxhall and Stockwell suspended the Victoria Line south of Victoria until 06.45. Russell Square station closed from 10.05 to 10.40 because of smoke reported in the lift machine room.

On **Tuesday 18 December**, problems with the staff taxi system meant that six stations were unable to open at the start of traffic and the Circle, Jubilee and Victoria lines having trains cancelled in the first hour or so of service. A signal failure on the southbound at East Finchley suspended the Barnet branch of the Northern Line from 12.55 to 13.30. The District Line was suspended between Turnham Green and Ealing Broadway and the Piccadilly Line between Acton Town and Uxbridge from 19.30 because of a signal failure on the westbound approaching Ealing Common. Two trains were stalled, the first reaching Ealing Common at 20.05, the second at 20.15. Once a repair had been made to a trainstop, the Piccadilly Line resumed at 20.50 and the District Line at 21.20. A person under a southbound train at Hampstead resulted in a 30-minute stand on the Edgware branch from 20.55.

Wednesday 19 December began with a signal failure on the eastbound at Farringdon from the start of traffic. Reduced Circle and H&C services continued to operate through the area under failure conditions until fixed at 06.30, but the Metropolitan Line was suspended to the City until 07.05. Mile End station closed from 13.00 to 13.45 because of an unattended item close by the station

A signal failure at Swiss Cottage disused station suspended the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park from 10.35 to 11.20 on **Thursday 20 December**. The only other incident occurred in the early hours of Friday morning but still in Thursday's traffic day. This was a person under a westbound train at Latimer Road at 00.10 which suspended what remained of the service to Hammersmith until the close of traffic.

The Jubilee Line failed to start up on **Friday 21 December** because of a line-based computer signalling problem. Once the problem had been resolved and the line populated with trains, services began at 06.30. A signal failure on the southbound at Paddington suspended the Bakerloo Line on the LU section from 06.40 to 07.20, following which trains worked through the area under failure conditions until fixed at 08.15. By then a special 'split' service had been implemented and for the morning peak 12 trains were cancelled. In the meantime Westbourne Park station closed from 07.10 to 08.30 because of a local power failure. After recovering from a 20-minute delay at Monument from 20.35 because of 'passenger action', the Circle Line was suspended from 22.55 because of a person ill on an inner rail train in platform 4 at Aldgate. Unfamiliarity with the route meant that the incident train couldn't be shunted into platform 3 until a pilotman arrived, and while that was being dealt with the Metropolitan Line was suspended east of Moorgate. All services resumed at midnight.

Saturday 22 December was as follows:

- Late start to Hammersmith & City and Circle lines because of problems with tunnel telephone lines adrift between Chalton Street (west of King's Cross) and Moorgate on the outer rail. Services began at 05.35.
- Uxbridge branch of the Metropolitan Line suspended 18.05 to 18.55 by points failing just north of Harrow-on-the-Hill. Once the offending points were secured services resumed under failure conditions until clear at 20.15.
- Central Line suspended Hainault – Leytonstone outer rail 19.05 to 19.35 – points failure at Newbury Park. One stalled train was authorised to return to Barkingside, arriving at 19.30.
- Westbourne Park station closed 21.50 to the end of traffic – local power failure.

There was nothing out of the ordinary to note for **Sunday 23 December**.

The Central Line side of Notting Hill Gate station opened late on **Monday 24 December** because of flooding in the lower part of the escalator machine room – Central Line trains non-stopped until 06.15. Highbury & Islington station closed from 06.20 to 07.30 because of a defect with the fire alarm system. The District Line service to Richmond was reduced by half (i.e., a 20-minute instead of a 10-minute service) from 10.20 until 12.30 because of a Network Rail signal track circuit failure.

"The Diary" continues in the Christmas & New Year Services, from page 76, this issue.