

UNDERGROUND DIARY

NOVEMBER 2014

Apart from the continuing shortage of Train Operators on the Central Line causing a number of cancellations throughout the day, the only incident of note on **Saturday 1 November** was the closure of Clapham South station from 23.35 until 00.15 because of a fire alarm activated.

On **Sunday 2 November** a signal failure at Parsons Green suspended the Wimbledon branch of the District Line from 14.05 until 14.45. Services resumed under failure conditions until clear signals at 15.10. A local power failure at Borough affected both lifts and therefore the station closed from 17.20 to 20.30. Points failing in the station 'throat' at Baker Street at 19.00 suspended the Metropolitan Line south of Wembley Park until 19.40.

Two lines were unable to start up at the start of traffic on **Monday 3 November**. The first was on the Bakerloo Line with work incomplete on the bay platform extension at Willesden Junction. Services north of Queen's Park began at 07.30. In the meanwhile, a signal failure southbound at Kilburn Park further disrupted the service on the remaining operational (LU) section from 06.00 until fixed at 06.50. Seven trains were cancelled for the morning peak. The other late starter was the Metropolitan Line between Moor Park and Watford with a signal track circuit failure at the latter. A taxi shuttle was soon implemented Watford – Croxley – Rickmansworth with a special bus service provided from 10.00. The problem was caused by two separate cable faults and services began at 11.55. Ten trains were cancelled for the morning peak. An alleged smell of smoke on the northbound at Oval resulted in the station closing from 08.40 to 09.00 with nothing out of the ordinary found, other than airborne dust. *This incident was picked up by the Evening Standard with the usual sensationalist reporting – "The .. station was closed .. while staff investigated reports of a blaze" and a tweet "Oval Station is on fire apparently".* A defective northbound Jubilee Line train at Wembley Park suspended the service north of Willesden Green from 10.50, although considerable 'blocking back' occurred on the approach. The offending train was sent to Neasden depot and a similar defect occurred on the following train, keeping services suspended until 11.35.

On **Tuesday 4 November** the Central Line was suspended between Leytonstone and Liverpool Street from 13.15 to 13.40 because of a passenger who had fallen on a westbound train at Liverpool Street and had sustained injuries. Selected eastbound trains were reversed east to west in the eastbound platform to maintain a limited westbound service. A points failure between Camden Town and Mornington Crescent, where the southbound Edgware and Barnet branches (via Charing Cross) converge, suspended the southbound Charing Cross branch from 19.05 until 19.55, and trapping one train in the failure area until 19.50. The day ended with Canary Wharf LU station closing from 23.45 to 00.10 because of a fire alarm activated.

A Network Rail signal failure at East Putney from 10.25 on **Wednesday 5 November** resulted in a reduced service west of Parsons Green, with Edgware Road S Stock trains reversing west to east there, culminating in a short suspension to Wimbledon until 12.15 whilst engineers replaced a defective piece of equipment. Two Network Rail signals failing on the northbound (Down line) at Stonebridge Park suspended the Bakerloo Line to Harrow from 13.15, with a limited service between there and Queen's Park. A cable defect and its replacement meant that services weren't able to resume until 19.35. Points failing at Ruislip Siding at 23.05 suspended the Metropolitan Line from Harrow to Uxbridge and the Piccadilly Line west of Rayners Lane. Two trains were stalled on the approach to the failure, one westbound and one eastbound, which were authorised to return to Ruislip and Ickenham respectively. However, the trains already in these platforms had to be moved back a car's length to accommodate the trains being sent back. What remained of the services resumed at 00.25.

Thursday 6 November began with the District and Circle lines suspended through the Aldgate area from the start of traffic until 06.15 because of signal track circuits failing. A person under a westbound Piccadilly Line train at Holborn suspended the service initially between Arnos Grove and Acton Town from 07.20, reduced to the section King's Cross – Acton Town from 07.50. Holborn station, closed from the start of the incident, reopened to the Central Line side from 08.05 and was fully opened when the Piccadilly Line resumed at 08.45. Some 20 trains were cancelled for the morning peak and into the early afternoon, with a timetabled service achieved for the evening peak. A door defect on a westbound Jubilee Line train at Canary Wharf at 19.10 suspended the service between Stratford and London Bridge until 19.40. Four trains were stalled between stations, two for 20 minutes, the other two for 15 minutes.

The Central Line has been intermittently suffering from a lack of Train Operators or defective trains of late, or sometimes a combination of both, but on **Friday 7 November** was down to the latter, with roundly five trains cancelled for much of the day. Points failing at Golders Green from 09.50 suspended the Edgware branch of the Northern Line until 10.20.

The only notable incident on **Saturday 8 November** was a person under a train at Bank at 12.20 which suspended the northbound City branch of the Northern Line until 13.25. Bank station continued to function (as did Monument) except for the Northern and Central Line areas, where trains non-stopped until 13.45 and 12.55 respectively.

At 19.00 on **Sunday 9 November**, points failing at Hanger Lane Junction for the Uxbridge line meant that a westbound Piccadilly Line train was diverted to Ealing Broadway and the Piccadilly Line suspended to and from Uxbridge until 19.35.

There was nothing to note for **Monday 10 November**.

The morning of **Tuesday 11 November** was uneventful, but at 12.25 a smell of Gas required Lambeth North station to close until 14.00. Two signals failing on the eastbound at Wood Lane set the Circle and H&C lines into 'severe delays' mode from 15.45 with a reduced service in consequence continuing under failure conditions until clear at 17.20. In the meanwhile, however, a person ill on a westbound train at Stepney Green at 16.40 suspended the Hammersmith & City east of Moorgate until 18.15. The District Line service was on the move after 25 minutes. Service recovery was then hampered for the rest of the evening with train description issues at Tower Hill, with wrong signals offered and signal 'releases' taken (to get the correct route), and signals failing on the westbound approach to Ealing Common from 22.30. A multiple signal failure on the eastbound at Boston Manor from 18.40 effectively suspended the Piccadilly Line west of Northfields until points were secured at 19.10 with slow progress thereafter until clear signals obtained at 19.25. The service was also affected by the later failure at Ealing Common (q.v.).

Wednesday 12 November began with points failing at Uxbridge at 05.50 after the departure of the Rail Adhesion Train. Metropolitan Line trains terminated westbound at Hillingdon and reversed via Uxbridge sidings while the first two Piccadilly Line trains to and from Uxbridge were cancelled. Services resumed at 06.40. A signal failure on the eastbound at Temple from 06.45 resulted in delays to the District Line and the inner rail Circle Line suspended. Once the failure had been cleared at 09.00 and the queue of eastbound trains reduced, the Circle Line resumed at 09.30. A person under a southbound train at Swiss Cottage shortly after 15.15 suspended the Jubilee Line between West Hampstead and Waterloo until 16.15.

On **Thursday 13 November** an obstruction in points at Richmond from 07.50 resulted in a reduced service on the branch until removed at 09.00. District Line service recovery was set back with an intermittent signal failure at Putney Bridge late-morning, which had been resolved by midday. A signal failure on the eastbound at Wood Green initially suspended the service east of King's Cross from 11.00 for 25 minutes while points were secured for through running. The failure continued intermittently throughout the day and coupled with a person on the track at Green Park at 16.55 set the service back for a further 15 minutes with the station closed until 17.25.

Two signals failing intermittently between Swiss Cottage and Marlborough Road disused stations initially set the Metropolitan Line into 'delay' mode from 09.05 on **Friday 14 November**. The service was suspended south of Wembley Park from 10.05 until 10.30 while repairs were undertaken. Wembley Central station closed from 12.10 to 15.30 because of a fire in an electrical equipment room.

The only notable incident on **Saturday 15 November** was the suspension of the Piccadilly Line between Heathrow Terminal 5 and T123 from 06.40 until 09.00 because of a signal failure by the sidings at Terminal 5.

The Bakerloo Line started up late at 07.45 on **Sunday 16 November** with a late finish to re-railing work at Piccadilly Circus. Points failing at Rayners Lane then suspended the Piccadilly Line west of South Harrow from 08.15, trapping three trains between stations which reached stations variously between 08.45 and 09.00. Services resumed at 09.20. The Metropolitan Line was as good as unaffected. A signal failure southbound in the South Wimbledon area from 12.40 caused service disruption right through until the end of traffic. Initially intermittent, suspensions south of Kennington took place from 20.50 to 21.20 and again from 22.20 until 23.10.

The District Line had a 35-minute late start from Upminster on **Monday 17 November** because of a signal track circuit failure. Other signal failures during the day in the same area continued to disrupt the District Line with two suspensions (12.00 to 12.30 and 18.25 to 19.05), along with other delays with trains being held while engineers endeavoured to rectify the problem. It wasn't until 20.30 that normal platform working at Upminster could be resumed, with residual delays continuing until late in the evening. A northbound Bakerloo Line train ran over what turned out to be a discarded bicycle basket just north of Wembley Central at 16.55 which became wedged underneath and initially suspended the service north of Stonebridge Park. However, the need to return a stalled London Overground train back to Stonebridge Park meant that there was no service north of Queen's Park from 17.30. Services resumed at 18.50. An outer rail Circle Line train accepted a wrong signal between South Kensington and Gloucester Road and ended up in platform 1 at the latter. Services were delayed until a District Line pilotman reached the station, to take the train out of the way.

Tuesday 18 November was an SSR day in terms of operational problems with another signal failure at Upminster from 13.05, suspending the service east of Hornchurch until 13.30. Points failing at Edgware Road suspended SSR services through the area from 16.00.



Once stalled trains had been dealt with, the C&H resumed at 16.20 but the District Line east of High Street Kensington resumed from 16.40. On-going problems with incorrect train descriptions saw one Piccadilly Line train accept a wrong signal at Hanger Lane Junction with the train ending up at Ealing Broadway around 16.30 (*Left*), in platform 9 next to a District Line D Stock train in platform 8. DM 150 is nearest the camera.

Photo: Tim Shields

A signal failure on the westbound approach to West Ham at 19.35 (on **Tuesday 18 November**) suspended the District Line east of Whitechapel and the Hammersmith & City Line east of Moorgate. Once pointwork had been secured, the District Line resumed at 20.15 (even though a correspondent reports that the District Line was at 'severe delays' – a 40-minute 'stop' is surely a 'suspension' in anyone's language?) with the Hammersmith & City Line resuming at 20.30. The most serious incident occurred in the early hours of Wednesday but still in Tuesday's traffic day, when the signal main current was lost between Chiswick Park, North Ealing and Northfields substations at 00.50. What remained of the District and Piccadilly Line services were suspended until the end of traffic. Fortunately, just one passenger train was stalled, being the second to last westbound Piccadilly Line train, which reached Turnham, Green at 01.15. Because the incident involved such a widespread area, eight sets of points had to be secured before trains could be moved, this being completed by 02.50. All remaining trains were then moved off to their depots, which was completed by 04.00, although one empty westbound District Line train was stabled overnight at Chiswick Park.

Not surprisingly, the previous night's signalling problems affected the start of traffic and into the morning of **Wednesday 19 November**. The Piccadilly Line was suspended between Hammersmith and Northfields, with a special service of 19 trains between Cockfosters and Hammersmith and 10 trains between Northfields and Heathrow – no service was possible on the Rayners Lane branch. With no trains being able to enter service from Ealing Common depot, the District Line service was suspended between Turnham Green and Ealing Broadway, with a very limited service west of Earl's Court to and from Richmond. Once the 'local' tracks between Acton Town and Northfields became available the District Line train outstabled at Chiswick Park (units 7044+7121) was worked empty to Northfields depot at 08.15. District Line trains were able to enter service from the east end of Ealing Common depot from 08.00 and from 08.35, a 40-train end-to-end service was implemented on the Piccadilly Line between Cockfosters and Heathrow with trains stopping at Turnham Green to assist the District Line's much depleted service. In addition, some Central Line trains were diverted to Ealing Broadway to ease the crowding there. The District Line train that had been stabled overnight at Chiswick Park and moved to Northfields went into service from Acton Town eastbound at 09.30. Although replacement buses were requested, it is always difficult to get these to site quickly, especially with rush hour traffic, the first

ones arriving for use at 10.00. Once normal signalling was restored (at 11.00), trains began running to Ealing Broadway from 11.30, and to Rayners Lane from 12.30. The incident resulted in 15 District Line trains and 40 Piccadilly Line trains being cancelled for the morning peak, the latter increasing to 45 trains (out of 68) by midday. The only other event of the day was a signal failure at Brixton at 16.45, suspending the Victoria Line south of Victoria until 17.10.

There was nothing to note for **Thursday 20 November**.

On **Friday 21 November** the first southbound Northern Line train was held at Tufnell Park for 20 minutes because of a signalling problem at Camden Town. Further problems at 06.30 resulted in southbound trains from the Barnet branch all running via Charing Cross until clear at 07.30. A similar problem on the northbound later in the day at 20.30 led to City trains running to Edgware and Charing Cross trains to High Barnet until 21.30. A Network Rail signal failure at East Putney set the District Line into 'delay' mode from 09.25 with initially a 50% service reduction west of Parsons Green. A 20-minute suspension then followed at 10.45 while a piece of defective equipment was replaced. A signal track circuit failure west of Edgware Road at 17.55 suspended the Hammersmith & City Line between Edgware Road and Hammersmith, the Circle Line in its entirety and the District Line east of High Street Kensington. The queue of trains approaching Edgware Road also had repercussions on the Metropolitan Line's service to and from the City. One Circle Line train was stalled approaching Edgware Road, which reached the station at 18.20. Problems in trying to rectify the failure meant that services didn't resume until 19.45.

An early-morning points failure at Boston Manor caused the first three westbound Piccadilly Line trains being cancelled to the Airport on **Saturday 22 November**. Further Network Rail signalling problems at East Putney disrupted the Wimbledon branch of the District Line from 08.55 until fixed at 10.30. A number of trains were terminated short at Parsons Green in consequence. The day ended with the Central Line suspended between Epping and Woodford because of a train stalled entering Loughton sidings at 21.45, having become 'gapped' off current. Services resumed at 23.25.

Escalator defects in the escalator interchange subway between Bank and Monument resulted in Northern Line trains non-stopping Bank from the start of traffic until 10.10 on **Sunday 23 November**. Also in trouble at the start of traffic was the Chesham branch of the Metropolitan Line, which was unable to start up until 15.45 because of a signal failure preventing access to the single line. This also had repercussions on the service to Amersham where a 30-minute delay occurred to the incident train with subsequent trains working through under failure conditions until fixed in the afternoon. Charing Cross LU station closed 11.00 to 11.20 because of a fire on a train in the main line station above. The Bakerloo Line was suspended between Elephant & Castle and Queen's Park from 11.25 to 11.50 because of an unattended item on the northbound platform at Marylebone. Heavy rain caused the flyunder south of Harlesden to flood from 13.45 which resulted in a suspension of the Bakerloo Line north of Queen's Park from 14.30, effectively until the end of traffic. A signal failure on the approach to Upminster suspended the District Line east of Hornchurch from 13.55 to 15.00, after three sets of points had been secured. One stalled train was authorised to return to Upminster Bridge, arriving at 14.15. The day ended with traction current discharged inadvertently between Old Street and Elephant & Castle at 23.50. Because of the number of overnight workers waiting to access the track it was necessary for these to be accounted for before recharge, thereby delaying the last southbound train to Morden by some 30 minutes.

Monday 24 November was thus:

- On-going flooding of the Harlesden flyunder – Bakerloo Line suspended north of Queen's Park from start of traffic until 06.35. However, two signals continued to remain at danger in the area with a reduced service in consequence until clear at 11.15.
- Chesham branch suspended for the second morning running from after the first train until 07.50 – points failing at Chalfont & Latimer.
- Victoria Line suspended south of Warren Street 08.25 to 08.45 – northbound train became defective whilst departing Pimlico.
- Five (defective) trains cancelled on the Jubilee Line for the morning peak.
- Central Line suspended east of Loughton from 22.25 to 23.20 – points failure at Debden. One train stalled on the westbound approach to Debden was authorised to return to Theydon Bois, arriving at 22.55.



On **Tuesday 25 November**, a signal failure westbound at Holloway Road from 07.15 resulted in delays and cancellations on the Piccadilly Line until it was fixed at 09.30 – a damaged cable was thought to have been the cause. Some 20 trains were cancelled for the morning peak and because of the resultant disruption, to cover service gaps caused by the signal failure at least one train seen at Northfields (*Left*) was terminated short at Hounslow Central.

Photo: Tommy Cooling

However, **Tuesday 25 November** began with a signal failure on the southbound approach to Queen's Park from the start of traffic. The incident train was stalled in the north shed with passengers, and the service suspended north of Queen's Park. A limited service was provided south of Queen's Park but issues with getting points secured meant that the stalled train didn't arrive in the platform until 06.50. Services north of Queen's Park resumed at 07.00 but only as a shuttle to Kilburn High Road until through running was able to begin at 07.50. The incident reached the attention of the media (notably the Evening Standard). A person under a northbound Jubilee Line train at Baker Street at 15.00 suspended the service between Waterloo and Finchley Road with the Bakerloo Line non-stopping. Services resumed and the Bakerloo Line platforms reopened at 16.15. The incident cost 12 trains cancelled in the evening peak. Later, Canning Town station closed from 18.50 to 20.20 because of smoke from an escalator.

Wednesday 26 November was thus:

- Both District and Piccadilly lines suspended through Acton Town from start of traffic until 06.50 – points failure west of Acton Town. This, combined with a train becoming gapped off current leaving Cockfosters depot at 07.30, resulted in 15 trains cancelled for the morning peak.
- Bakerloo Line suspended north of Stonebridge Park from 06.00 and north of Queen's Park from 06.35 – trackside fire north of Wembley Central. Services resumed at 07.20.
- Northbound Northern Line suspended Camden Town to Golders Green from 06.15 to 07.00 – signalling problem northbound at Hampstead.
- A report of an armed passenger caused an extended eastbound Piccadilly Line delay from 18.10 to 18.45. With the train having been identified, it was eventually held for the police at Holborn. In the meanwhile, with the congestion of Piccadilly Line trains in the Acton area, some District Line Ealing trains were diverted to Richmond.

There was nothing of significance to note for **Thursday 27 November**.

On **Friday 28 November**, an intermittent multiple signal failure on the westbound between Bounds Green and Wood Green disrupted the Piccadilly Line from 07.00. Despite it being seen on the information boards that there were 'severe delays', the incident train was stalled approaching Wood Green for 35 minutes, which suggests that a 'suspension' (of service) between Arnos Grove and at least King's Cross would have been more appropriate for passenger information purposes. The problem continued through to mid-morning with further disruption caused by a passenger ill on an eastbound train at Holloway Road at 11.15, adding a further 20 minutes to the overall delays. At the west end of the line the inevitable 'shuttle' service between Acton Town and Rayners Lane was implemented – at one time just three trains provided a 20-minute service. The Piccadilly Line service never did recover and between 20 and 30 trains remained cancelled for the rest of the day. Another multiple signal failure, this time approaching Barking on the eastbound, suspended the District Line east of East Ham (but the service thinned out by reversing short at other locations) and the Hammersmith & City Line east of Moorgate. The District Line resumed at 10.35, the H&C at 10.50. A loss of (Network Rail) traction current between East Putney and Wimbledon suspended the District Line west of Parsons Green from 20.20. Three trains were stalled between stations, two on the

eastbound which returned wrong line to Wimbledon Park and Southfields after an hour and one on the westbound, which arrived at East Putney at 21.50. Services resumed at 22.00 but remained in 'delay' mode because of an on-going signal failure at Wimbledon Park.

A southbound Jubilee Line train stalled at Bond Street at 07.35 on **Saturday 29 November**, suspending the service between Finchley Road and Waterloo. Once movement had been obtained the train departed in restricted manual mode to Charing Cross enabling services to resume at 08.05. One train was stalled approaching Bond Street for 20 minutes.

The Richmond branch of the District Line was disrupted during the day by an intermittent Network Rail signal failure at Richmond. The first instance, at 09.20, caused an initial 15-minute delay, as did the second, from 10.35. However, the Richmond branch was suspended from 14.15 until 16.00 while main line staff attempted a repair. However, this was short lived for the service was suspended again from 18.05 to 19.00 and again from 19.50 to 22.35. An eastbound Piccadilly Line train was offered a wrong signal (towards the Metropolitan Line) at Rayners Lane at 19.40. Fortunately this was not accepted but the correct route couldn't be obtained, suspending services through the area until 20.30. One westbound Piccadilly Line train was stalled approaching Rayners Lane until 20.00, and eastbound trains approaching Rayners Lane and Eastcote until 20.10.