

# NEWS AND NOTES

## SARAH'S RETURN



**Above:** Sarah Siddons made her first run outside depot limits on 12 May 2025, the first time since 2019, having since been repainted and overhauled at Eastleigh. Originating from Ruislip Depot, the train ran to Neasden Depot, reversing there. Behind Sarah Siddons is the Director's Saloon coach, the 4-TC and, at the rear, class 20 diesel 20.205. Seen approaching Preston Road the formation is on the northbound fast. Preston Road substation is in the distance, just to the right of centre. At the time of writing, it was expected that this would be the last visit of Sarah and the 4-TC to Neasden, which is no longer possible following the commissioning of CBTC signalling at the end of May.

**Photo: Jude Pirkis**

**Below:** The test trip also included a visit to Amersham, reversing in platform 1. Sarah Siddons is at the north end of the train (Left) and class 20 diesel 20.205 at the south end (Right).

**Photos: LURS Collection (Left) and Chris Cobley (Right)**





**Above:** On Wednesday 14 May, Sarah Siddons was taken on another test trip from and to Ruislip Depot, on this occasion minus the 4-TC coaches, as they had gone off to the Chinnor & Princes Risborough preserved railway the previous day. With Sarah Siddons nearest (and at the rear) of the train, the ensemble is seen heading away towards Harrow-on-the-Hill on the southbound Uxbridge line.

**Photo:** Jude Pirkis

## MILE END



**Above:** The gates of Mile End station firmly closed for Central Line rail grinding work on 10/11 May 2025, with District and Hammersmith & City services non-stopping. Three members of staff are outside, giving out information to intending passengers.

**Photo:** Kim Rennie

All of the external tiling has been removed from Oval station, in what appears to be a refurbishment project (Above, Right). The photo (Right) shows the station as it was on 22 July 2008.

**Photos:** Roger Tuke (Above Right) and Kim Rennie (Right)

## OVAL



## LNER LONDON SUBURBAN LINES ROUTE DIAGRAM

An LNER rail diagram is on display in the North Weald booking hall of the Epping & Ongar Railway. It shows a number of lines that were later incorporated into the Underground network ...

- Epping, Ongar, Hainault, High Barnet, Harrow to Watford, Chesham and Aylesbury, and those that weren't ...
- Finchley – Edgware and Alexandra Palace branch.

## PRIORITY SEATING

## FARRINGDON

Observed on Jubilee Line 1996 Tube Stock DM 96051 was this extra 'priority' seat back, not in the normal end positions.



Photo: Mike Reid

Further to the notes in the May issue, the last Elizabeth Line station to receive 'posters' behind seats was Farringdon – see also page 422.



Photo: Kim Rennie

## GWR D STOCK CONTINUES UNDER TEST



**Above:** The three-car battery D Stock with Great Western Railway continues under test between West Ealing and Greenford, seen at West Ealing (Left) and at Greenford (Right).

**Left:** Seen departing Greenford on 2 May 2025 and descending to pass underneath the westbound Central Line (on the right).

At the time of writing, the train has yet to enter passenger service.

**Photos:** Justin Bailey (Above, Left), Tommy Cooling (Above, Right) and Kim Rennie (Left)



A BLAST FROM THE PAST

MORE AT CHARING CROSS



The low negative shoe detector on No.24 road adjacent to platform 1 at Hammersmith (Circle and Hammersmith & City lines) seen back in 2016. These are used as their title suggests but are normally located in depots. It is thought that this was decommissioned when CBTC signalling was commissioned in the area.

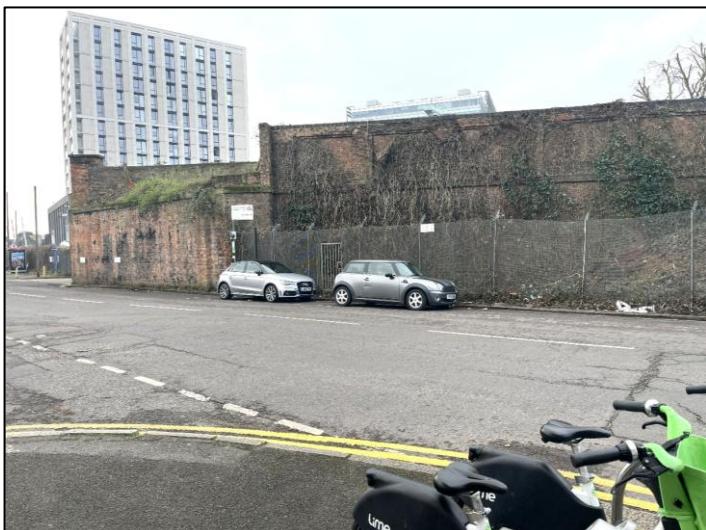
*Photo: Sinclair Spencer*



As noted in the May issue of *Underground News* (pages 265-266), the Trafalgar Square entrance to Charing Cross station is closed until the autumn. The entrance on the square itself is closed off with these blue hoardings – that on the opposite side of the junction just has banners around it with the same information.

*Photo: Antony Badsey-Ellis*

## REMNANTS OF THE SOUTH ACTON BRANCH



**Above:** Two views of the remnants of South Acton branch bridge abutment in Bollo Lane, exposed by undergrowth removal. It is presumed that they will be demolished for the future Bollo Lane development. The District Line's South Acton branch closed after traffic on 28 February 1959.

*Both photos: Paul Griffin*

## WHITE CITY



**Opposite:** (Lower Left) Looking west at White City, the old bridge at the west end of White City has been partially removed with the remainder due to be done shortly it would seem. The new bridge has been in use for a while now.

## STRATFORD



*Photo: Richard Clowser*

*Opposite: (Lower Right) The old entrance building to Stratford station is seen on 23 April 2025. This closed in April 1998 along with a long subway to the platforms. A new concourse opened in April 1999, prior to the opening of the Jubilee Line the following month.*

*Photo: Keith Ward*

## 1983 TUBE STOCK DISPOSAL



Whilst most of the 1983 Tube Stock that was withdrawn in 1997-98 went for scrap (some, eventually – the last in 2015!), one driving motor car (3721) was sent to the Tyne & Wear Fire Service at Washington for training purposes, departing Neasden on 20 July 1998. It is now being disposed of and is to be replaced by a withdrawn T&W Metro car and an improved training facility.

*Both photos: Gary Thornton*

## WEMBLEY PARK



## VINTAGE UNDERGROUND COACHES



*Above: Two Underground vintage coaches operated on the Kent & East Sussex Railway on 26-27 April 2025, comprising replica District Railway coach 100 (nearest) and the LT Museum's restored 'Jubilee' coach 353.*

*Photo: Paul Jessett*

**Previous Page:** (Lower Left) 'The northbound junction home signal at Wembley Park on the Metropolitan Line was one of those decommissioned with the SMA8 changeover on the weekend of 31 May/1 June 2025 (see next issue for service details). The signal itself dates back to the resignalling in 1938 when there were three routes – northbound fast, northbound local and (from November 1939) northbound Bakerloo. Track and route rationalisation in 1954 saw the route to the Bakerloo platform abolished and the 90° arbour lights decommissioned – where they were are still visible.'

*Photo: Brian Hardy*

## PICCADILLY LINE CO-ACTING SIGNALS



## MEANWHILE ... OVER IN BRUSSELS



*Above:* A window of the travel enquiry office at Brussels Midi/Zuid, complete with Underground roundel.

*Photo: Paul Bradley*

*Left:* For some time now, co-acting signals have been in the process of being installed on the Piccadilly Line in connection with the introduction of the new 2024 Tube Stock, because of the different sighting conditions. However, the eastbound fast starting signal (WR6) at Northfields is a previous installation for SPAD mitigation. Apart from the driver's information board, other items of interest include the red fog repeater switch box under signal plate WR6, the reminder to 'check signal' and the fact that Northfields eastbound is a service regulating point (Reg Point).

*Photo: Kim Rennie*



## HOTEL 1938 TUBE STOCK

In a previous issue of *Underground News*, we featured former class 483 motor car 129 from the Isle of Wight at its new home as an Air BnB at Thorpe Morieux in Suffolk, incorrectly bearing its LT number 10289, which should in fact be 10229.

These views show the homeliness of the carriage and how it has kept many of its recognisable features.

The living area is seen (*Opposite, Top Left*) and the bed and kitchenette beyond (*Opposite, Top Right*).

*All photos: Ian Allington*



## REVERSING AT NORTHFIELDS



In a previous issue of *Underground News*, we reported that the new Piccadilly Line timetable incorporated Northfields reversers using the westbound fast platform to reverse rather than in the sidings west of the station. Information about these reversing trains are included on the platform's dot matrix indicators, which seems 'odd' for eastbound trains to depart from platform 2. One train is seen negotiating the crossover east of the station.

*Photo: Kim Rennie*

## NORTHOLT



Work is underway (again) in the provision of a lift at Northolt. Work first began in 2019 but was cancelled because of Covid and the working area removed. Seen on 2 May 2025 and looking east on the westbound side of the island platform the platform has been narrowed considerably.

*Photo: Kim Rennie*

## CELEBRATING VE DAY – 8 MAY 2025

## CONDITION OF TRAINS



Much has been written in the press and posted on social media about the appalling condition of trains, especially with graffiti on the Central and Bakerloo lines. A southbound Bakerloo Line train is between Kenton and South Kenton on 8 April 2025 is in a better (but not perfect) condition.

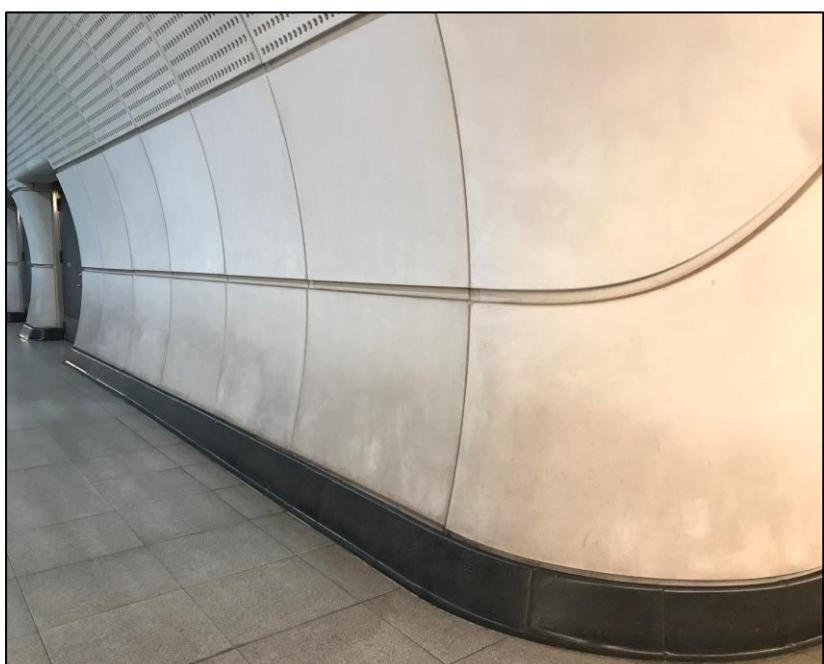
*Photo: Ian Grainger*



**Above:** Throughout the Underground on 8 May 2025, Victory in Europe Day was celebrated, with special posters being displayed, that (above, left) being seen at Uxbridge. Some station whiteboards were also used to commemorate the event, as seen at Bow Road (Right). A two-minute silence was also observed across London's transport network at midday on 8 May and the Royal British Legion also fundraised in TfL stations.

*Photos: David Rowe (Left) and Kim Rennie (Right)*

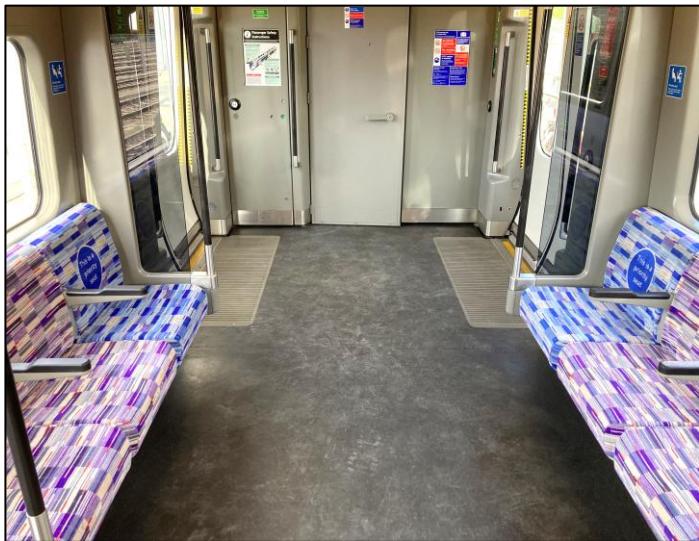
## POOR CONDITION OF CROSSRAIL TUNNEL STATIONS



The huge new deep level stations of Crossrail now show the dismal look of neglect. Little attention appears to have been paid to the ease of cleaning the bright white surfaces! After only a couple of years, not only were there stains behind the platform seats (see *this* and *previous issues*), but the scuff marks and accumulating dust on the lower curved panels of public tunnels looked poor. Also, many of the tiled floors were in very poor condition and the platform edge walls seem to collect fluff up high in the textured finishes. Whatever maintenance techniques are now, the large public areas of these new stations must mean that the maintenance bill will be high!

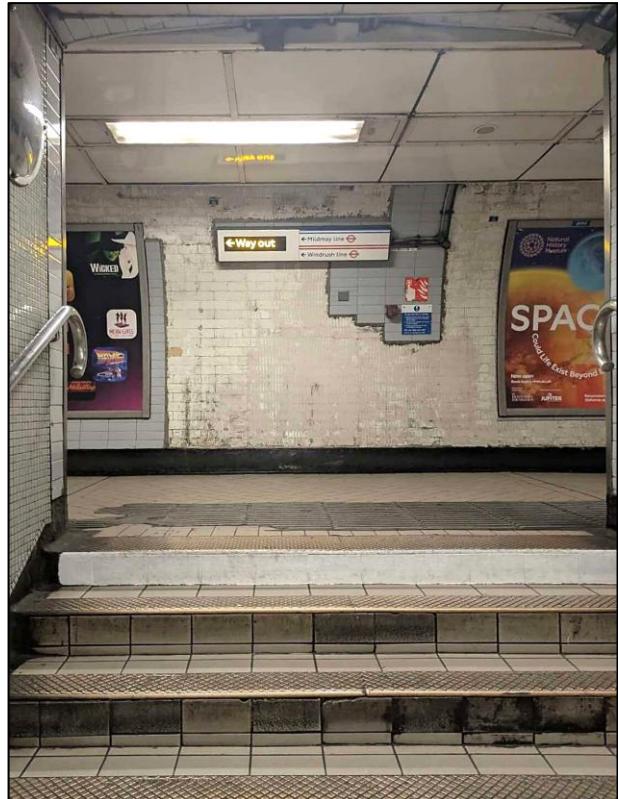
*Photo: Kim Rennie*

## NEW LOOK FOR PRIORITY SEATING



A new priority seating design, with greater colour contrast to make them more easily identifiable was launched by TfL on Monday 28 April 2025. To ensure that passengers can identify a priority seat more easily, all new priority seats introduced from now on across the TfL network will include the words 'This is a priority seat'. This matches the appearance of 'Please offer me a seat' badges and the Government's Blue Badge scheme and aligns with the priority seating design already in place on the Jubilee Line. The design retains the same distinct striped pattern that passengers have come to associate with the line, but with a blue colour scheme rather than purple to help people, especially those with visual impairments, differentiate between the two types of seat. Passengers will see the new priority seating design strategy on the new DLR and Piccadilly Line trains, as well as on refurbished Central and Waterloo & City Line trains.

## HIGHBURY & ISLINGTON



The original tiles on the Great Northern and Victoria lines exposed at Highbury & Islington on 14 May 2025. Is this part of a refurbishment project or the 'managed decline' we keep hearing about?

*Photo: Kim Rennie*

## MORE AT LEYTON AND TRACK RECORDING



On Thursday 15 May, the Track Recording Train (L132-TRC666-L133) passes eastbound through Leyton, looking east. Further to the photos in the May 2025 issue of *Underground News*, this shows work under way at Leyton in providing a new station entrance and making the station step-free with lifts – blue hoardings now adorn the westbound platform as seen on the right. The Langthorne Road bridge is seen in the distance where there used to be a (morning) rush-hours only entrance to the station, which closed on 3 March 1995. Opening in c.1901, it became morning rush hours only from 8 April 1958.

*Photo: Keith Ward*