

FROM THE PAPERS

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31.10.12 EVENING STANDARD – Underground passengers who were stuck in the dark for 2 hours when the power went off had to clamber through the carriage doors to a rescue train today. More than 170 people were on the early morning Central Line train which got stuck in a tunnel near Holland Park. The stranded train is believed to have hit a piece of engineering equipment on the track which in turn damaged the power rail. Following the problem a major section of the Central Line was suspended throughout the morning peak, leaving frustrated commuters facing a battle to get to work.

01.11.12 NEW CIVIL ENGINEER – Crossrail tunnelling operations were back underway this week following recent collapse of the conveyor and hopper muck away system in West London in late September. Both TBMs on the western running tunnels are now back in operation. A project spokesman said that both machines were still on track to reach Farringdon station in the third quarter of next year. The first trainload of excavated material will leave the Westbourne Park site for Northfleet later this week. Until the rail operation gets underway the stockpile will continue to be drawn down by lorry.

01.11.12 NEW CIVIL ENGINEER – Driverless Underground trains will not run on London’s network until 2020 at the earliest LU MD Mike Brown told the London Assembly. Speaking in front of the Assembly’s Transport Committee, Brown added that there were no plans at present to test driverless trains on the Underground network and all options for using new technology would be analysed in a “considered calm way”. Mayor Boris Johnson has pledged to introduce automatic train control, already in place on the Victoria, Central and Jubilee lines, on 48% of rolling stock by 2014.

01.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – A cracked rail on the Jubilee Line delayed rush-hour services today as union and LU bosses clashed over a 24-hour engineers’ strike. The crack near Canary Wharf, saw westbound services reduced to 5mph. Bob Crow of the RMT, which ordered the strike over pensions and working conditions, said “severe restriction” were “entirely down” to the strike. LU said the strike was having no effect, the restriction was temporary and service was good.

06.11.12 METRO – Fresh from celebrating its 25th birthday, the DLR has been rated the “most important urban railway development of the past 50 years”, by Modern Railways magazine. The DLR was opened by the Queen in August 1987 with just 15 stations on two routes and in its first year carried 6.7M people. Today it has 45 stations and carries 90M passengers a year. It is London’s first fully accessible railway providing step-free access to all stations.

06.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – The Underground union ASLEF have threatened strike action on Boxing Day. They are demanding extra money and/or a day off in lieu, but TfL bosses said their £46,000 salary already covers the bank holiday. It would be the third successive Boxing Day strike by train drivers. The crux of the dispute dates back to 1992 agreement which saw staff getting higher salaries and increased annual leave in return for working “some” bank holidays. Previous demands have included triple salary for Boxing Day and a day of in lieu, but ASLEF refused to confirm if they were the same this year. ASLEF’s Mick Whelan said, “We hope to get it resolved. The company has only recently agreed to sit around the table with us. If no deal is reached it is quite likely drivers would be balloted for strike action”. Drivers with RMT, which is not involved in the dispute, may refuse to cross picket lines. LU’s Howard Collins said, “It would be quite wrong for ASLEF leadership to ballot for industrial action while we remain engaged in discussions to resolve this issue”.

07.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – *Text from Paul* – “Re the Boxing Day Underground strike, please LU, may I have a job with your organisation? I am fit, well-spoken and hard working and would love to drive a train and be paid £46,000 per year for the privilege; shift work would also be no problem. What planet are these strikers on?”

09.11.12 METRO – Work to upgrade the Victoria Line is now complete. A new signalling system, allowing faster and more frequent services, means trains run every 2 minutes at peak times. This will

increase early next year, with up to 33 trains an hour providing more than 20% extra capacity overall. Together with new and more spacious trains, travel on the line should now be quicker and more comfortable.

12.11.12 METRO – More than 40,000 local residents and businesses are being invited to comment on proposals to extend the Northern Line from Kennington to Battersea via Nine Elms. The plans – which are subject to funding and permission from Government – would include two new stations at Battersea and Nine Elms. The scheme would cut journey times from this part of London to the West End and the City to around 15 minutes, and reduce the pressure on Vauxhall station and the existing Northern Line south of Kennington. It would also bring wider access to leisure and employment opportunities for local people. Previous consultations have shown there is strong support for the project. The latest aims to provide more detailed information about the proposed sites for the new stations and ventilation shafts.

13.11.12 METRO – London Overground celebrated its 5th birthday yesterday just a month before its final extension across South London to create the capital's first orbital railway. Passenger numbers have quadrupled in the 5 years since TfL took over the management of the line. It has set new standards for rail travel in the capital with staffed stations, air-conditioned trains and high frequency services. On 9 December 2012 the extension from Clapham Junction to Surrey Quays will be opened.

13.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – An Underground strike on Boxing Day moved closer today after peace talks broke down. The result of a strike ballot will be declared on 17 December. It means West End stores, shops and businesses won't know until the last moment if there will be an Underground service on Boxing Day, the first day of the post Christmas sales and their busiest day of the year. ASLEF, the train drivers' union, expect overwhelming endorsement for the strike call. It will be the third successive year Underground Boxing Day services have been crippled by strike action in a dispute over pay and bank holiday working.

14-30.11.12 RAIL 709 – Proposals to turn the Post Office Railway tunnels into an urban mushroom garden have won an award from the Landscape Institute.

14-30.11.12 RAIL 709 – The third Crossrail TBM – *Elizabeth* – has been lifted into the Limmo Peninsular shaft near Canning Town. It involved a 1,350 tonne crane that itself took many weeks to assemble. The TBM will start tunnelling later this year, travelling under the River Lea towards Canary Wharf. Contractors will shortly repeat the operation with TBM *Victoria*. Both TBMs will receive maintenance within the Canary Wharf station box before continuing towards Farringdon. A large conveyor system, similar to that at Royal Oak, will take the earth from the bottom of the shaft onto ships.

14.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – LU bosses are to make personal appeals to train drivers to work on Boxing Day and defeat a threatened 24-hour strike. Drivers will be told that in return they can cash in up to two days of untaken leave and be paid double time – worth about £500.

14.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – Unemployed London people are being given the chance to dig for career victory at Europe's first dedicated tunnelling academy. The first of 400 apprentices have recently enrolled at the specialist training school where star graduates can expect to earn a six-figure salary. The plant was opened last year to remedy a shortage of qualified workers to construct tunnels for the £14B Crossrail link. Students of the Tunnelling & Underground Construction Academy in Ilford, learn liquid concrete spraying to create tunnel walls. There is a shortage of qualified nozzle-men as they are responsible for some extremely expensive equipment and by training them it will bring them in line with other areas in civil engineering projects.

14.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – *By Columnist Richard Godwin* – “The London Overground network is 5 years old this week, as it is 5 years since TfL took over Silverlink services. The new trains are bright, clean and punctual and they refresh parts of the capital that other lines don't reach, such as Hampstead Heath, Dalston and Hoxton. No wonder it has some of the highest customer satisfaction levels of any railway in Britain. Still, most of it is not so new. The Whitechapel branch (*sic!*) dates to 1876. At a time when MPs argue over projects – High Speed Rail? Thames Estuary airport? – the Overground shows that making improvements to what is already there is far more effective”.

15.11.12 METRO – Londoners can now check on Crossrail’s tunnelling and construction progress using a new, online mapping tool. The “near you” tool overlays the rail line’s route and construction sites onto a map of the city. Viewers can zoom in to see where the tunnelling machines are, which sections are complete, and which areas are next. Currently, both tunnelling machines – *ADA and PHYLLIS* – are approaching Hyde Park. Crossrail is the largest addition to the transport network in London and the South East for 50 years, and will be completed in 2018. Visit www.crossrail.co.uk/near-you

16.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – Homeowners living along the route of Crossrail are expected to enjoy a huge windfall over the next decade as property values soar by 25%, according to a new study. Some 57,000 new homes and 3.25M square metres of commercial space – more than double the capacity of Canary Wharf – would cluster around some of the new stations. Hotspots enjoying a 25% house price rise would be centred on Ealing Broadway, Southall, Hayes & Harlington, Farringdon, Whitechapel, Custom House, Woolwich and Abbey Wood. Those near stations at either end of Crossrail, in Berkshire and Essex, would see home values increase by 20% above the baseline trends.

17.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – Mayor Boris Johnson came under pressure over his key election pledge to introduce driverless trains on the Underground, after reports the idea was being shelved. He was urged by his own London Assembly members to “set the record straight”. LU managing director Mike Brown said that any such trains were a long way off. TfL says 2020 “at the earliest” – though that now looks wildly optimistic.

17.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – The number of passengers using the cable-car link across the Thames has plummeted since the Olympics. The £60M Emirates Air Line between Greenwich Peninsular and the Royal Docks was opened on 28 June by the Mayor who said it provided “a much needed river crossing”. The link was built to convey up to 2,500 passengers an hour. On 10 September – the day after the Paralympics ended – an average of 229 passengers per hour used the cable cars. An average of 1,747 people an hour used the service for the last 3 days of the Olympics, compared with 711 per hour for the 3 days after the Olympics.

18.11.12 SUNDAY EXPRESS – Rail unions are planning to hold a protest at the memorial for the victims of the King’s Cross fire today on the 25th anniversary of the disaster. Relatives of the 31 killed and 100 who were injured warned the union not to hijack the solemn event. Two plaques at the station commemorate the firemen and members of the public who lost their lives in the tragedy on 18 November 1987. RMT’s Bob Crow has encouraged supporters to bring union banners to a demonstration about current safety on the Underground. The union has been fighting an increasingly bitter battle over manning levels on train services, such as planning to introduce driverless trains. London Assembly’s Andrew Dismore said, “It is not a protest. It will be a dignified event and a commemoration for the people who died but at the same time it’s a reminder that we have to be ever vigilant so disasters do not happen in the future”.

19.11.12 METRO – A limited edition of the Underground map with the names of ParalympicsGB 2012 medal winning athletes in place of stations, is now on sale. The map highlights the achievements of the 97 athletes and five horses who contributed to the ParalympicsGB medal haul. It follows the popular TeamGB Olympic medallist map released in September. Each Underground line is devoted to a different sporting discipline; e.g. Circle Line for athletics, and the Central and Hammersmith & City lines for cycling. These maps are limited to 2,012 copies.

20.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – Underground services face disruption as LU engineers stage a fresh strike in a long-running row over pensions. RMT members who maintain services on the Northern, Jubilee and Piccadilly lines will walk out for 24 hours on 23 November. The dispute affects hundreds of staff working for Tube Lines – which has now been taken over by TfL – who complain they are on worse pensions than other employees.

23.11.12 THE TIMES – The 24-hour strike by maintenance workers on the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines which was expected to take place today has been called off.

26.11.12 METRO – For the sixth year, a mountain of new, unclaimed children’s toys handed in to TfL’s Lost Property Office(LPO), have been donated to the Salvation Army’s Christmas Present Appeal. All the toys donated were left on the transport network and went unclaimed for more than 3 months. All are in their original packaging and range from dolls and electronic gadgets to play sets

and board games. The LPO has received more than 1.5M items since it was established in 1933; 220,000 last year including bags, books and clothing to mobile phones, laptops, wallets and cameras. Around 25% of the items are restored to their owners. Items not claimed after three months are either donated to charities, recycled, disposed of, or sold at auction.

28.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – Thousands of commuters had to be evacuated when a fire alert caused Victoria Underground station to be closed for 90 minutes, causing rush hour chaos. TfL said the station was closed at 18.30 yesterday and reopened after fire fighters found a fault on the alarm panel. District and Circle Line trains continued to run through the station non-stopping.

29.11.12 METRO – From next year, graduates will have the chance to join the biggest construction project in Europe, Crossrail, and help transform rail transport in the capital. The first successful applicants will take part in a two-year programme undertaking a series of training and work placements to gain a range of experience. Crossrail already employs more than 100 apprentices and is now set to provide an extraordinary opportunity for graduates.

29.11.12 EVENING STANDARD – LU faces a huge fine after admitting criminal liability over a runaway train that put passengers' lives at risk. Two workmen were forced to dive onto a platform as the maintenance train raced through Highgate station in August 2010. The runaway unit came within 600 metres of a passenger train. LU and Tube Lines admitted a single count of breaching their duties under Health & Safety at Work Act. The maximum sentence is an unlimited fine.

30.11.12 METRO – Weekend closures to upgrade the Underground are on hold for the next four weekends. The only exception is early morning Sunday closures on the Edgware branch of the Northern Line to install new signalling. LU's David Stokoe said, "Weekends in the run-up to Christmas are among the busiest. We recognise that our customers are keen to enjoy all that London has to offer in terms of shopping, entertainments and other festivities. As a result, our teams work hard to ensure minimum impact and have stopped weekend closures in central London from now until after Christmas".

NOVEMBER NORTH WEALD VILLAGE LIFE – You may have spotted the Epping-Ongar Railway and North Weald station on television recently, as the BBC i-player advert for their new radio service was filmed at the station! We were delighted to welcome Jo Whiley and the crew to the railway, and this work helps bring in funds to support restoration works.