

# UNDERGROUND DIARY

## SEPTEMBER 2014

The problems with points at Edgware Road continued into **Monday 1 September**. From the start of traffic, the Circle Line was suspended in its entirety, the Hammersmith & City Line west of King's Cross and the District Line east of High Street Kensington. This continued to be the case until 07.15 with a 'special service' implemented for the morning peak, comprising 14 H&C trains and 7 inner rail Circle Line trains. A further suspension of service for the offending point motor to be replaced began at 11.20 but Hammersmith & City Line trains were able to operate as far as Baker Street to reverse west to east. Notwithstanding that, some 23 out of the 31 trains had been cancelled at midday along with two Edgware Road trains. Services on all three lines resumed at 13.20.

**Tuesday 2 September** was thus:

- Central Line suspended west of Marble Arch until 06.00 – late finish to overnight work on points at North Acton.
- Metropolitan Line suspended south of Wembley Park until 05.45 – points failure south of Wembley Park.
- Reduced Victoria Line service throughout the day – only one platform available at Brixton because of defective pointwork.
- Central Line suspended Marble Arch – Liverpool Street from 11.15 – stalled eastbound train at Holborn. A train immediately behind reached the platform at Holborn at 12.00 while a second train had been authorised to return to Tottenham Court Road, arriving at 11.40. The defective train was eventually propelled from the rear to Liverpool Street sidings, enabling services to resume at 12.40.
- Reduced Bakerloo Line service north of Queen's Park 11.15 to 13.30 – Network Rail signal failure at Stonebridge Park.
- Bakerloo Line further disrupted from 12.25 – suspended south of Piccadilly Circus until 13.15 because of points failure at Lambeth North.
- Northern Line suspended north of Colindale 20.55 to 21.30 – defective train at Burnt Oak.

The H&C, Circle and District lines were late starting up through Edgware Road on **Wednesday 3 September** because of a late finish to further overnight work on points at Edgware Road. The District Line was also late starting up from Upminster because of a late finish to overnight work on points there. All services began from 05.45 and the day was otherwise uneventful.

More pointwork problems, this time at Morden, caused delays to the Northern Line service from the start of traffic on **Thursday 4 September**, with platform 5 not available for use. To reduce the queue of trains at Morden, selected trains were terminated short at Tooting Broadway and Kennington but rather remarkably, no trains were declared as cancelled for the morning peak! The platform was restored to use from just after 09.00, which caused a further 15-minute delay while points were unsecured. A security alert on an eastbound Piccadilly Line train at Ickenham suspended both services west of Rayners Lane from 18.05 until 18.45. A smell of burning at platform level closed Gants Hill station from 20.25 until 21.05.

A combination of defective trains and Train Operator shortage meant there were 11 trains cancelled on the Central Line for the morning peak on **Friday 5 September**. A person under a train at Aldgate at 15.15 suspended the Metropolitan Line into the City, the Hammersmith & City east of Edgware Road and the Circle Line in its entirety. (The Hammersmith & City Line was already in disarray because of an earlier points failure at Barking). Services resumed at 16.05, apart from the inner rail Circle which resumed at 16.45. However, a further failure at Barking suspended the Hammersmith & City service east of Moorgate from 16.55 to 18.05 and after then only a 50% service was provided for a time.

**Saturday 6 September** was as good as uneventful, apart from a number of cancellations on the Central Line because of no Train Operators, peaking at ten during the evening, and causing extended gaps in the service. The situation was similar on **Sunday 7 September** but with only five trains cancelled in the evening on the Central Line.

Westbound trains non-stopped Cannon Street from the start of traffic until 06.40 on **Monday 8 September** because of a defect with a fire door. After the morning peak a defective S Stock train at

Edgware Road reduced platform availability for over an hour, causing some trains to be short tripped. A 'security alert' close to the railway between East Putney and Southfields suspended the District Line west of Putney Bridge from 14.10 to 15.25.

Hyde Park Corner station closed from 07.40 for an hour on **Tuesday 9 September** because of escalator defects, while at 08.10 a westbound Central Line train was unable to move off from Loughton because of a defect, thereby suspending the service between Woodford and Epping. The train was eventually propelled into Loughton sidings, enabling services to resume at 08.45. A fatal road accident on the North Circular Road impacted on the Victoria Line during the early evening because staff were unable to get to work because of traffic chaos and as a result, nine trains were cancelled at one time.

**Wednesday 10 September** was uneventful until 13.00, when the Bakerloo Line was suspended north of Queen's Park because of Network Rail points failing at Stonebridge Park, a problem that began earlier in the day without serious problem. The District Line's Richmond branch was suspended from 14.10 to 15.20 because of a person trackside between Richmond and Kew Gardens.

There were no excursions from the norm on **Thursday 11 September**.

On **Friday 12 September**, 'passenger action' at Pinner suspended the southbound local service between Moor Park and Harrow from 14.30 until 15.00. The ever-changing staffing situation with Train Operators on the Central Line increased during the afternoon and early evening, with 10 trains cancelled for the evening peak. It seems to be the norm that such cancellations are greater on the late shift than the early!

The only blot on the landscape (apart from more Train Operator cancellations on the Central Line) on **Saturday 13 September** was a late start to the Victoria Line. Two cracked rails found overnight north of Blackhorse Road on the southbound and north of Green Park northbound prevented services from running north of Seven Sisters and south of Warren Street until 05.50.

Two Network Rail signals failing in the Wimbledon Park area from 12.00 on **Sunday 14 September** initially reduced the service west of Parsons Green by half, but with trains each taking some 40 minutes to traverse the failure area, the service degenerated further but with no suspension as such, just (very) slow progress. Clear signals were obtained at 13.20. A signal failure at West Ham caused 'delays' (under failure conditions) from 19.30 to 20.45, with the Hammersmith & City Line suspended east of Moorgate in consequence. The day ended with late eastbound District and Hammersmith & City services 'held' at stations on the approach to Barking from 23.30 to 00.15 because of a person under a c2c train.

**Monday 15 September** began with a delayed start to the Northern Line, with weekend work on replacing points at Camden Town Junction overrunning. Services were suspended north of Moorgate and Charing Cross until 06.05, by which time some 20 trains had been cancelled. A defect with the new pointwork was discovered at 07.00 which resulted in points being secured and a segregated service implemented. Because of the speed restriction imposed, trains to the Barnet branch were further delayed because of the extra time taken to get through the area. An attempt to run a near full service came to grief with late running and missed crew reliefs and a 'special' service was introduced from just after midday with trains to High Barnet running via Charing Cross and trains to Edgware via the City. Cancellations increased to 20 for the evening peak, and 34 at midnight. Points failing at Brixton from 06.25 initially resulted in a reduced service, with only one platform being available. However, the service was suspended south of Victoria from 07.25 to 08.10 and again from 09.50 to 10.45. Nine trains were cancelled for the morning peak in consequence. Points failing at North Acton Junction from 07.55 because of a defective block joint suspended the Central Line west of White City. One westbound train was stalled at the junction home signal and reached West Acton at 09.10 after an extended delay in securing pointwork. Services to West Ruislip resumed at 09.35 and to Ealing Broadway at 10.25, all of this costing 17 cancelled trains for the morning peak. An eastbound Central Line train stalled east of Bethnal Green at 18.45, suspending the Central Line between White City and Leytonstone. Apart from the incident train, two other trains were stalled on the approach to Bethnal Green, reaching the station at 19.05 and 19.15. The defective train eventually gained movement in 'restricted manual', was detrained at Mile End and limped onwards to Leytonstone middle platform, arriving at 19.55, from when services were free to resume.

The southbound Jubilee Line was late starting up on **Tuesday 16 September** because of a track defect southbound near Swiss Cottage. Services were suspended between West Hampstead and Waterloo until 05.45 with Metropolitan Line trains making an additional stop at Willesden Green. A westbound Piccadilly Line train stalled on departure from Ealing Common at 19.25, causing a 25-minute delay to the Rayners Lane branch and District Line to Ealing Broadway.

Two sections of lines were unable to operate from the start of traffic on **Wednesday 17 September**:

- A partial collapse of the tunnel roof in the vicinity of King's Cross disused SSR station suspended services between Edgware Road (C&H) and Baker Street (Met.) to Aldgate. With the operation of current rail section switches at Great Portland Street, Farringdon and Moorgate, a limited service was able to operate between Hammersmith and Baker Street from 06.00 (at which time only five trains out of the booked 28 were 'on the road') and between Barking and Moorgate from 06.15. Half the service (of 16 trains) was cancelled for the morning peak with services resuming at 09.05. In addition, several stations had to close for selected periods because of overcrowding, including King's Cross (LU), Euston (LU), Moorgate and Monument-Bank (with the Waterloo & City suspended and DLR suspended between Shadwell and Bank in consequence).
- Central Line suspended east of Liverpool Street, apart from Loughton – Epping, because of a defective road-rail vehicle at Woodford and severed signal cables at Leyton. Services began at 06.45 and had recovered sufficiently to have just nine trains cancelled for the morning peak. More service damaging, however, was a signal failure at Bethnal Green from 09.50, resulting in eastbound trains having to pass through the area under failure conditions in 'restricted manual'. Amazingly, there was no service suspension noted, but 22 trains were cancelled at midday and 25 mid-afternoon. There was severe blocking back of trains on the eastbound approach to the failure, back to Marble Arch, with trains being moved up station-to-station. Shuttles were implemented at the extremities (West Ruislip – White-City, Ealing Broadway – North Acton, Epping – Leytonstone, Hainault – Leytonstone and Hainault – Woodford) until 15.30, when clear signals were obtained. Service recovery then began which, in the event, took until well after the evening peak to get back to normal.
- The only other 'notable' was on the Bakerloo Line where two signals failing southbound at Warwick Avenue from 11.30 resulted in several cancellations until the problem was finally fixed at 15.50, which in itself required several short suspensions, the last one for some 20 minutes.

**Thursday 18 September** began with a loss of signalling control on the Bakerloo Line, suspending the service south of Queen's Park. Once staff had been put in place in critical Interlocking machine Rooms (IMRs), a limited 'split service' service over the LU section began at 06.35. Once full control had been restored in the control centre, services were able to be increased with the split service discontinued after 08.00. King's Cross LU station closed from 09.10 for 25 minutes because of a fire alarm activated. The Metropolitan Line was suspended between Northwood and Harrow-on-the-Hill from 11.05 to 13.00 because of a person under a southbound train at Pinner.

**Friday 19 September** was as follows:

- District Line suspended to Ealing Broadway from start of traffic until 05.55 – failure of the westbound 'home' signal. The eastbound service through Upminster Bridge was also delayed from 06.00 because of two signals failing because, it was thought, of a lightning strike overnight. Trains worked through under failure conditions but with some of the service being turned short at Dagenham East and Barking. Clear signals were obtained at 13.00.
- 25-minute delay eastbound at Osterley from 08.05 with a passenger ill on a train.
- District Line suspended Edgware Road – Earl's Court from 13.45 – defective westbound S Stock train at Earl's Court. Eventually restricted manual mode was obtained and the train departed empty to Lillie Bridge depot via Olympia, enabling services to resume at 15.00.
- Bakerloo Line suspended south of Queen's Park from 19.00 – two signals failing northbound at Piccadilly Circus. The suspension was necessary because the two trains involved took in excess of 15 minutes each to pass through the failure area and for the need to access the track. A limited service was introduced between Queen's Park and Paddington from 20.10 with services resuming at 20.30 after a traction shoe had been removed from points.

**Saturday 20 September** began with the Bakerloo Line suspended north of Queen's Park from 08.10 to 08.55 because of 'passenger action' on a northbound (Bakerloo) train at Stonebridge Park. A failure of the junction home signal on the approach to High Street Kensington suspended the District

Line to Edgware Road and the Olympia shuttle from 16.35 for an hour. Fortunately no trains were stalled and trains were able to be reversed in the bay platforms at High Street for the duration.

A partial loss of station lighting necessitated Camden Town station remaining closed from the start of traffic on **Sunday 21 September**, opening at 07.45 but closing again from 09.45 to 11.25. Points failing at Camden Town from 10.35 suspended the Northern Line's Barnet branch and southbound service between Camden Town and Kennington via the City until 11.30. Service recovery from this incident was marred by a person under a southbound train at Tufnell Park at 13.20, suspending the Barnet branch once again, this time until 15.20.

On **Monday 22 September** a signal track circuit failure on the northbound approach to Wembley Park from 08.15 resulted in northbound trains having to run via the northbound fast, omitting stops at Preston Road and Northwick Park until 09.15 and then again from 09.50. However, services had to be suspended from 10.30 until 11.00 while points were secured and investigations took place. Normal running resumed from 11.35. Train Operator shortage continued to affect the Central Line throughout the day, with ten trains cancelled for the evening peak.

Signals failing at Elephant & Castle from the start of traffic on **Tuesday 23 September** suspended the Bakerloo Line south of Lambeth North. Once a piece of ballast had been removed from a trainstop, services were able to commence at 06.55. Just after 08.15, smoke from a (previously departed) westbound train at Manor House brought the Piccadilly Line to a stand while the fire brigade attended and dealt, causing an initial 25-minute delay. Two trains were stalled in tunnels, one approaching Manor House and the other approaching Wood Green. *(The incident attracted media coverage in the Standard!).* Manor House station remained closed until 09.35.

**Wednesday 24 September** was thus:

- Archway station closed 09.50 to 10.15 – fire alarm activated.
- Victoria Line suspended Seven Sisters – Highbury & Islington from 12.15 but extended to King's Cross from 12.35 after points failed at Highbury – person under a southbound train at Finsbury Park. One train was stalled approaching Finsbury Park for the duration.
- Jubilee Line suspended Wembley Park – Waterloo 19.05 to 19.40 – person ill on a southbound train at West Hampstead. The train was moved to Finchley Road, reversed south to north and the person attended to in the siding at West Hampstead.
- Waterloo & City Line suspended 22.05 until the end of traffic – points failure at Waterloo.
- District Line suspended east of Whitechapel and Hammersmith & City Line suspended east of Moorgate from 23.30 to midnight – loss of signalling control between Campbell Road and Heathway substations. Two trains were stalled between stations for the duration.

On **Thursday 25 September**, a person under a southbound train at King's Cross suspended the southbound City branch of the Northern Line from 07.20 and closed the LU station. However, the station reopened to all lines except for the Northern Line at 07.55 and a limited southbound service resumed between Moorgate and Kennington. Services resumed and the Northern Line platforms reopened at 09.10. Continuing scanning problems with the signalling at the west end of the District and Piccadilly lines resulted in a westbound District Line train accepting a wrong signal at Hanger Lane Junction at 10.50 and ending up at North Ealing, then empty to South Harrow to reverse. Another incident with a child's buggy occurred at Finsbury Park at 13.50, when a (fortunately) empty buggy was blown onto the eastbound Piccadilly Line track and was struck by an arriving train. The service was suspended between King's Cross and Arnos Grove until 14.20. *(A previous and recent 'buggy' incident occurred at Goodge Street in August and wasn't reported in these pages, as there was no delay to services and the outcome was a good one. However, the incident did receive extensive coverage in the media, youtube, etc.).*

Burnt Oak station was unable to open until 06.40 on **Friday 26 September** while police investigated an altercation close to the station. The Piccadilly Line was suspended east of Oakwood (and 'thinned' east of Arnos Grove) from 07.20 because of a signal track circuit failure between Oakwood and Cockfosters. Services resumed at 08.05.

The west end of the District Line had a delayed start on **Saturday 27 September** because of a signal failure within Lillie Bridge depot, resulting in a number of cancelled trains until it was resolved. Insufficient staff closed Holloway Road station from 07.05 until 07.45. Later in the day a signal failure at Arnos Grove suspended the Piccadilly Line east of Wood Green from 19.10 to 19.45.

**Sunday 28 September** was thus:

- 25-minute northbound delay at Finchley Road from 14.15 – passenger ill on a Metropolitan Line train.
- Northern Line suspended Stockwell – Moorgate from 15.35 – points failure at Kennington. Suspension became Morden – Moorgate from 16.10. Services resumed throughout at 16.55.
- Central Line suspended Liverpool Street – Leytonstone from 20.35 – defective eastbound train at Bethnal Green. The train moved off in restricted manual mode, arriving at Leytonstone at 21.00, from when services resumed.

**Monday 29 September** was uneventful until 13.30, when a smell of burning and smoke was reported immediately east of Blackfriars – a smell of burning had been prevalent from earlier in the morning but nothing had been found. The Circle Line was suspended while further investigations took place, resuming at 15.25 but suspended again from 15.45 to 16.20. The source of the problem proved difficult to locate but further problems during the evening resulted in a suspension of both lines from 20.20 to 21.00 and again from 21.20 to 22.00 with Blackfriars LU station remaining closed until the end of traffic. The only other problem was a combination of minor incidents from 18.00, which disrupted the Central Line and included a person on the track at North Acton and then subsequently at White City, a defective eastbound train at Bond Street and two separate instances of a person ill on trains – at Stratford and Leytonstone.

The month ended with the following, on **Tuesday 30 September**:

- District Line suspended westbound Upminster – Barking from start of traffic – points failing at Upminster. A limited service began from 05.40, increasing after the fault was fixed just after 06.00.
- Lambeth North station closed 10.05 to 12.25 – lift defects.
- Bakerloo Line suspended south of Piccadilly Circus 11.10 to 11.35 – defective northbound train at Lambeth North.
- Waterloo & City Line suspended 21.30 to 21.50 – insufficient Train Operators.