

Questions for Southern and Thameslink

- 1. Is there an update on any review to increase the number of trains running from London Bridge to East Croydon, stopping at Forest Hill? 2 trains an hour from London Bridge to Forest Hill is already not enough, particularly in the evening, pushing more users onto the Overground, leading to unnecessary overcrowding on the Overground Service. We would like this service to be extended back to at least 4 trains, including services that connect to East Croydon directly in addition to the existing Victoria trains, as this has many other benefits for Lewisham residents.***

As part of the timetable introduced in September last year, we replaced the East Croydon to London Bridge via Forest Hill stopping service with a London Victoria to London Bridge via Forest Hill stopping service.

The context to these changes is the continued need to respond to the gap between our costs and revenues as while demand has partially recovered, it has stabilised at around 80% of pre-pandemic levels. Revenue is reduced by similar levels, with the gap between our costs and revenues currently in the region of £150 million a year.

Our approach is to create the best fit of services to demand by making the most efficient use of the resources and the funding available to us, with the London Victoria to London Bridge service designed to provide capacity for journeys to both stations.

We know that passengers will always prefer more frequent trains, but the current two trains per hour service between London Bridge and London Victoria via Forest Hill does have enough capacity for the route, with services typically lightly loaded outside of peak times. Connections to East Croydon are available at Norwood Junction.

We will continue to keep passenger use and feedback under review, but increasing the services from two trains per hour to four trains per hour would require an increase in funding.

Questions for Network Rail

- 2. The steps on the footbridge over Forest Hill station tracks were recently reported to be in a bad condition, creating a trip hazard. This seems to be a recurring issue. How is this monitored and could there be a more permanent solution to keeping these safe?***

Thank you for raising this matter.

Network Rail is the owner of the station and these steps, but the bridge – together with the station – is let to TfL and day-to-day maintenance is the responsibility of Arriva Rail London (ARL, the operator of the London Overground service) under their contract.

As the owner of this structure we do have responsibilities for maintenance; but, without going in to excessive detail, day-to-day wear-and-tear and maintenance requirements such as – for example – renewing a life-expired anti-slip panels on the stair tread, would be the responsibility of ARL.

In support of delivering their maintenance responsibilities ARL undertake frequent inspections of the station including the footbridge (and report any faults that are our responsibility to resolve to our appropriate team), and ARL will be able to provide further information to respond to this question.

- 3. Future engineering works planned this year severely disrupt my constituents. I have attached the engineering works scheduled from 17 August to December. There are far too many incidents to type. It is particularly annoying that we had no trains after 9:15 pm from New Cross Gate in July and no trains to New Cross Gate after 9:15 pm between 9 October and 12 October. Why are there so many engineering works starting so early? Why does Network Rail think this is acceptable for Lewisham residents? Because I do not? How many such engineering works have been scheduled in 2023 that have closed the London Overground routes on the West Croydon/Crystal Palace routes when the service should operate?**

There is never a good time to disrupt services and I am sorry for the inconvenience caused by our engineering works to your residents, as well as customers elsewhere on the network.

On this part of the network services generally start early and finish late. This means that there is not much time overnight to undertake important maintenance or renewals work; by the time we have taken possession, isolated the electrical current and set up the site compound (if required), it's almost time to pack everything up again ahead of the start of the next morning's services. This means that working only overnight can be inefficient, and indeed may simply not give us enough time to complete some more complicated engineering tasks that we have to undertake.

As a publicly-owned organisation we do need to operate efficiently, and so this can mean when necessary extending our hours of engineering into the time when services would normally run. We are funded by the taxpayer – but we are of course extremely mindful of the importance of customer revenue for the industry as a whole, as well as the importance of providing a reliable service that customers can trust (not least so that they continue to choose to travel by train in the future). For that reason, we work very closely with the train operators to plan our possession calendar in such a way as to minimise disruption as far as possible (and advertise changes as early as possible), while also delivering our work in an efficient manner. This will generally mean a slightly earlier finish than normal on some nights where we are undertaking planned engineering work.

East London Line closures

Maintenance of the East London Line is partially the responsibility of Network Rail, and partially the responsibility of Transport for London; essentially, the track is owned and maintained by TfL north of New Cross/New Cross Gate, while the lines south and west of New Cross/New Cross Gate are owned and maintained by Network Rail. The early closures that you mention for July and upcoming on 09 October – 12 October are not due to Network Rail engineering work but, rather, due to planned Transport for London engineering work in the East London Line core, where maintenance and renewals are TfL's responsibility.

Since the main Overground train depot is located at New Cross Gate, closure of the East London Line core will generally mean that no services can operate to Clapham Junction or to Crystal Palace/West Croydon over Network Rail-managed track. Transport for London will be able to provide you with further information on their access strategy for planning work on the East London Line core.

Planned engineering works 2023

That said, there are planned Network Rail engineering works that will impact on your residents during the midweek. Our routine maintenance is planned on a defined cycle by line; two relevant examples in this area are:

- The New Cross Gate – Sydenham line is closed from 2350 every six weeks (upcoming example; 11-14 December 2023)
- The Norwood Junction to West Croydon route is closed from 2300 every twelve weeks (upcoming example: 4-7 December 2023).

Do note that the TfL tracker will show earlier times than these, as the published timetable shows the point at which services start to ramp down, to allow the closure to start on time.

We undertake maintenance work during overnight closures, but it is also necessary from time to time to take a full-day or even full-weekend (and sometimes longer) closure in addition to overnight working. Each year there are four planned possessions on this route, which will be supplemented by further closures where renewals work needs to take place that cannot be accommodated alongside maintenance activities.

For the calendar year 2023 we have taken or have planned the following weekend engineering work which will affect the New Cross Gate – Sydenham route:

- **4 and 5 March 2023**
 - o Saturday and Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace
- **13 and 14 May 2023**
 - o Saturday – closed Sydenham to West Croydon
 - o Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace
- **30 July 2023**
 - o Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace
- **20 August 2023**
 - o Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace until 0800 only
- **3 September 2023**
 - o Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace until 0800 only
- **16 and 17 September 2023**
 - o Saturday and Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace (primarily for the replacement of a crossover at Forest Hill)
 - o See pictures below for an illustration of the scale of engineering that is carried out during full closures.
- **23 and 24 September 2023**
 - o Saturday and Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace (primarily for the replacement of a crossover at Forest Hill)
- **12 November 2023**
 - o Saturday and Sunday – closed New Cross Gate to West Croydon / Crystal Palace

I have identified the following Transport for London weekend closures for the line north of New Cross Gate – TfL will be able to provide further information;

- **4 and 5 February 2023**
 - o Saturday and Sunday – Highbury & Islington to New Cross Gate
- **18 and 19 March 2023**
 - o Saturday and Sunday – Highbury & Islington to New Cross Gate
- **11 November 2023**
 - o Saturday – Highbury & Islington to New Cross Gate
- **25 and 26 November 2023**
 - o Saturday and Sunday – Highbury & Islington to New Cross Gate

As part of our work to reduce the overall impact of closures and to minimise the amount of disruption that our engineering works cause to customers, we do have a number of initiatives

to improve how we plan and undertake maintenance. As part of our investment in the region's railway in recent years we have installed a considerable number of remote asset condition monitoring systems. These mean that we can understand the condition of key railway assets and components without having to manually inspect them, freeing up more time to perform other work on the railway. Similarly, a number of trains are fitted with thermal cameras and other equipment, which means that we can visually monitor assets without necessarily having to attend in-person.

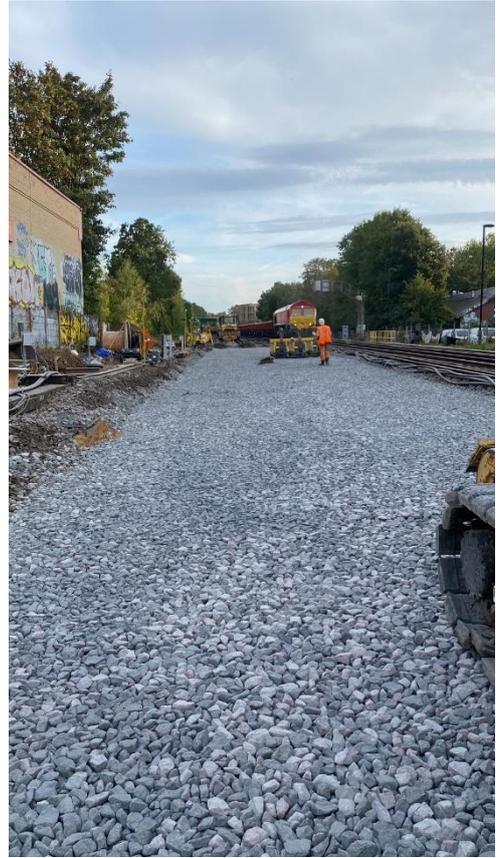
Illustration: S&C renewal around Forest Hill Saturday 16 and Sunday 17 September

As shown above, the route from New Cross Gate – Crystal Palace/West Croydon has been closed for a number of weekends recently, including 16/17 September. These closures have been taken so that we could undertake renewals work on the line. This included the replacement of a crossover at Forest Hill, together with renewing the track (including reballast, resleeper and rerail) as well as renewing a number of switches and crossings – these are the parts of the railway that guide trains from one track to another and like any moving part, they are subject to more wear-and-tear than the fixed parts of the railway.

I know that closures due to planned engineering works like this do cause inconvenience for customers, but this work is important to ensure that the railway is operating in a safe and reliable way.

The images below show the progress over the course of the weekend of 16/17 September in renewing the track, which involved renewing the ballast and sleepers as well as the rails themselves.







Questions for Southeastern

4. ***The Ladywell station building, and so the ticket office, has been shut on numerous occasions over that last three months (not taking into account strike days). As the ticket machine does not dispense some travelcards/passes, this is extremely inconvenient for passengers, as is the inability to ask transport-related questions. What are the reasons for the unannounced closures please?***

Staff shortages can be for a variety of reasons including sickness, annual leave, and turnover. In these instances, we normally cover the day-to-day activities of station staff by using a general-purpose relief. We apologise for any inconvenience this is causing.

Questions for TfL

5. **As we raised in a recent meeting with councillors and TfL, could we examine the potential of adding a right turn filter light at the junction of London Road (A205) and Honor Oak Road (northbound)? There is a need to encourage drivers to use main roads in order to reduce rat-running through residential roads in the Devonshire Road neighbourhood. It might also improve bus flow traffic through Forest Hill around the station.**

- We recently met with the Forest Hill Society and Lewisham councillors to understand their ideas around how to improve the road network in the Forest Hill area
- We currently we do not have a way to efficiently allow the right turn from London Road to Honor Oak Road and we do not have further capacity to investigate new

programmes of works this year, as we are currently working with Lewisham Borough officers on a full pipeline of schemes and projects to be implemented over the 2023/24 period in Lewisham

- However, if this is a priority for the borough, we are willing to carry out assessments to determine costs and benefits to bus routes and what on-street signal equipment would be required when we have capacity in the New Year

6. With the expansion of the ULEZ beyond the South Circular, will TfL be continuing to use the existing ULEZ enforcement cameras that were placed in the local area? If so, what will be their purpose? Will the ANPR technology be used for any other forms of local enforcement? Is it possible to use them to get traffic counts on local streets?

- Cameras within the ULEZ charging zone are used to monitor compliance of ULEZ & LEZ (and Congestion Charging in central London). A non-compliant car can be parked within the ULEZ zone and will not be charged unless it drives in the zone.

It does not have to cross out of the boundary, merely move within the charging zone – therefore, existing cameras still play an important part in monitoring compliance inside the whole ULEZ area

- In terms of additional uses, we have no plans to use ANPR for local enforcement or traffic counts

7. Can you please provide an update regarding the proposed changes to the South Circular Road? In particular, will TfL be reconsidering the Western end point of the proposed rerouting, since the stretch between the Council buildings and St Dunstan's College is particularly dangerous, and requires urgent improvement to make it safe for all road users, particularly cyclists?

- The public consultation for the Catford Town Centre project closed on June 12 this year

- The next steps include the publication of a consultation report this Winter 2023 and taking the project through the concept design stage to reflect feedback collected as part of the consultation

- Subject to the outcome of the consultation, approval of further design works and funding approval TfL aims to begin construction in 2025. The works will take approximately two years to complete

8. Can TfL please provide an update on the reopening of Kidbrooke Road to HGVs now the works which caused the temporary closure have been completed? This is having a negative effect on Lewisham's roads.

Answer to follow

9. Pedestrians, residents and road users on Sandhurst Road in Catford South suffer an outdated and inadequate street design and traffic system. While some contributing factors variously come under the Council and police's responsibilities - and I am making representations to them - TfL also has its part to play in improving the situation, particularly through ensuring that its bus drivers adhere to the 20mph speed limit and act responsibly. What measures does TfL have in place to ensure that buses on Sandhurst Road specifically (and also

across Catford South), adhere to speed limits and what more will be done to ensure compliance?

- We have received correspondence on this issue via Councillor Burgess
- Having been made aware of this issue Stagecoach are taking this matter very seriously and they are looking for solutions above and beyond the usual activities
- Where necessary formal disciplinary processes are being utilised with the drivers
- We are also working to arrange an onsite meeting the first couple of weeks in October with local ward councillors

10. (for TfL / Network Rail) The steps on the footbridge over Forest Hill station tracks were recently reported to be in a bad condition, creating a trip hazard. This seems to be a recurring issue. How is this monitored and could there be a more permanent solution to keeping these safe?

TfL- Infrastructure, such as footbridges on the Overground network are owned and maintained by Network Rail

11. When does Transport for London intend to consult on the proposed route of the planned SL4 - Canary Wharf to Grove Park Superloop service and what alterations to the route are they willing to consider? The lack of direct bus routes from south and eastern Lewisham into Greenwich has been an issue of local complaint for many years and the lack of stops in Greenwich Peninsula on the proposed route is a missed opportunity to correct this.

- Between 16 November 2022 and 11 January 2023, we consulted on the proposed opening bus network for the Silvertown Tunnel, due to open in 2025. We received 644 responses to the consultation in total. Thank you to those who took part and shared their views
- After carefully considering the feedback we received, we have decided to proceed with the proposed opening bus network, with some amendments to the original proposals. Specifically:
 - The proposed new route X239 will run between Grove Park and Canary Wharf, Westferry Circus, with a non-stopping section between Sun-in-the-Sands roundabout and Orchard Place
- Further detail as to why we have made these decisions is included in the final consultation report. You can also read our responses to issues frequently raised, which is available on our Have Your Say page.
- The network will begin operating when the Silvertown Tunnel opens in 2025. We will continue to keep the bus network under review as the local area continues to grow and develop
- Route X239 would also form part of the Mayor of London's proposed new 'Superloop' bus network. New electric buses are another major step towards the commitment to a frequent zero-emission bus network.

12. There is severe overcrowding on the London Overground at Brockley Station. TfL says there are no plans to deal with it. This is not acceptable. We have no tube, and Southern Railway has withdrawn half our hourly services, leaving just two an hour – when they can be bothered to run them.

Will TfL reconsider its intention to do nothing about the capacity issues on the London Overground and take action? If so, when and what?

If not, why should Lewisham put up with this overcrowding and lack of investment by TfL?

- We acknowledge that there is severe crowding on the Sydenham corridor during the height of the AM Peak. This has been exacerbated by the reduction of the Southern service to two trains per hour, which was undertaken by Southern and their contracting authority the Department for Transport
- We are considering how best to mitigate this by providing additional capacity. Two options have been proposed so far:
 - Operating additional services during peak periods between Crystal Palace and Dalston Junction / Highbury and Islington via Canada Water. We want to ensure that the provision of such services does not have an adverse impact on performance and reliability that would negate their value. We need to do further analysis on this before deciding whether or not to proceed
 - Operating additional services during peak periods between Crystal Palace and London Bridge, replacing capacity on this routing that has been lost following the reduction to Southern services
- This would represent a new routing for London Overground services that would necessitate significant changes to operational arrangements and driver training. Further work is therefore required to establish the feasibility and business case for this change
- There are currently no confirmed timescales for the implementation of either of these options due to the further work they require

13. The air conditioning on the London Overground trains on the West Croydon/Crystal Palace/New Cross routes is starting to fail. Some carriages are hot, while others are cooler. Who is responsible for maintaining the air conditioning, Deutsche Bahn/Arriva or TfL? If the contractor is responsible, has TfL checked the maintenance schedule to ensure Deutsche Bahn/Arriva is carrying out routine maintenance on the air conditioning units?

What evidence has Deutsche Bahn/Arriva provided that they maintain the air conditioning? If not, why not?

What records exist that the air conditioning units were checked and repaired where they were broken or not working?

In regard to the maintenance of the air conditioning system (HVAC), all parties (Arriva Rail London / Rail for London and Alstom) monitor the air conditioning system across the fleet continuously

- Although failures are few and far between, we are not aware that it is hit and miss. Where failures are identified on particular days, the emergency hopper windows will be opened to allow for air to circulate within the vehicle and for the train to remain in service, and that night when the unit returns to depot, the air conditioning unit will be replaced

- The windows are always secured and locked and can only be released by an operational member of the team from Alstom or Arriva, unless the window has been opened by unauthorised persons. If a window is open and there is no defect, then the HVAC system will false read, and thus may heat if it sees below norm temperature measurements
- The HVAC units are subject to the same Vehicle Maintenance Schedule routine maintenance as all other components on the train and maintenance tasks are completed at the following periodicities, unless defects have been reported in the meantime:
 - Saloon Air Conditioning – Inspect – 90,000 miles (90,000 miles equates to around 2.5 months)
 - Saloon Air Conditioning – Functional Test – 90,000 miles
 - Saloon Air Conditioning – Refrigerant Leak Detection – 90,000 miles
 - Saloon Air Conditioning – Overhaul – 8 years
- All reports of HVAC defects are recorded daily under the Railway Industry reporting Systems and these are reviewed daily at the Failure Review Board meeting held daily and the rectification and mitigation actions taken are discussed and agreed by tri-party stakeholders Arriva Rail London, Alstom and TfL
- TfL's Overground performance team are happy to coordinate a visit to NXGD, should further questions arise

14. On 14 August, a broken train created even more delays. I am starting to question the maintenance provided by Arriva/Deutsche Bahn. Trains are in service that looks uncared for, and the air conditioning on carriages is hit and miss. Someone had forced open a window – usually secured shut – presumably because the air con was not working well on overcrowded carriages.

Does TfL check the maintenance routines of the London Overground? If not, why not?

Does TfL apply penalties for poor maintenance performance? If not, why not?

- TfL do check the maintenance routines. All maintenance tasks completed by our Maintainer of choice (Alstom) are reviewed and approved (by TfL and Arriva as part of Assurance processes) before being included in the Vehicle Maintenance Schedule (VMS). Regular Audits of maintenance take place and Alstom carry out in process checks of routine maintenance on a regular basis
- TfL penalises Alstom for failure of facilities including Air Conditioning under the terms of the Train Service Agreement
- There are operational reasons for line suspension, including lack of opportunity to turn units for reduced services to take place and these lines are shared with Southern/GTR and heavy utilised making short term perturbation mitigation very difficult

15. From Monday, 7 August, to Thursday, 10 August, there were no London Overground trains beyond New Cross Gate to the rest of Lewisham from 11 pm. Moreover, on Monday that week, I used the Overground, and when the train terminated at New Cross Gate, there needed to be Overground staff to ask where the replacement bus services were located. There were no directions to the replacement bus services. After checking, it seemed there were no replacement

bus services except those provided by Southern Railway – no sign of those buses. I witnessed a person who was confused by what was happening. English was her second language, and she didn't know where to go and why the train was not going beyond New Cross Gate. This was after 11 pm. This is a safety issue. It is not good enough there were no staff to help or replacement buses for the London Overground.

Why were no London Overground staff visible to help passengers?

Why did TfL provide no replacement buses for the lack of two Overground routes, and Southern would only provide two buses an hour?

- TfL do not procure buses for engineering works south of New Cross Gate as these are done with Network Rail and GTR (Southern)
- Posters were used around stations, signposting local bus or tram use. There were 2 replacement buses provided by GTR which would cover the last services from London Bridge
- In terms of station staff presence, we will investigate this with ARL along with how this signage is displayed and what announcements are made and how improvements can be made

16. On Sunday, 13 August, there were no London Overground trains to and from Crystal Palace or Southern Trains. Only the West Croydon line was operating with overcrowded carriages. The TfL Go App said there were no trains from Sydenham to Crystal Palace. It didn't say there were no trains at all on that line.

Is it standard practice to suspend the entire line but only indicate Sydenham to Crystal Palace is affected?

If so, is this misleading?

Why is the entire line suspended when the engineering work is only between Sydenham and Crystal Palace?

- The TfL Go App only shows information about our services, so would not show what GTR (Southern) services would or wouldn't be operating
- The app was displaying the correct information for London Overground services

17. Much of the Sydenham Hill area (including the Sydenham Hill Estate, Lammas Green and Otto Close) suffers from poor transport links and a low PTAL rating. With new significant residential development underway in the area, can TfL review the area's public transport accessibility and identify what options are available (including increased bus frequency or additional routes) in light of current and potential funding?

- The locations mentioned in the questions are already served by TfL's existing bus network, however our bus network is continuously under review
- TfL will work with Lewisham borough officers to review connectivity of bus services in light of residential development to encourage the use of route S106 and support car free development

18. What feasibility studies or other preparatory work needs to be done by TfL or others in order to make the Bakerloo Line Extension a possibility? What has already been carried out and what is planned, and what is the expected timeframe for that?

- In March 2021, Statutory Safeguarding Directions were issued by the Secretary of State for Transport to safeguard the route of the Bakerloo Line Extension from Lambeth North to Lewisham. The issuing of Safeguarding Directions recognises the benefits the scheme would deliver and is the result of constructive discussions between the Department for Transport (DfT) and Transport for London (TfL)
- TfL remain committed to delivering the Bakerloo Line Extension, but this remains dependent on putting together a viable funding package. While the issuing of Safeguarding Directions does not represent a commitment from government to fund the extension, discussions continue to develop a funding package, while also being realistic about the funding that local sources could contribute to delivering an extension
- Alongside its partners at the London Borough (LB) of Southwark and LB Lewisham, TfL continues to develop plans for the scheme, which would extend the Bakerloo line to connect an historically under-served part of London to the Tube network, unlock thousands of desperately needed new homes, and support new jobs. To this end, TfL is currently progressing feasibility designs for the tunnelled elements of the scheme, designs for the stations along the route (to be done in partnership with LB Southwark and LB Lewisham) and is updating the scheme business case. TfL has also designed the planned extension into the ongoing works at Elephant & Castle London Underground station to create a new entrance and ticket hall
- In addition, TfL is actively progressing proposals to upgrade the existing line through the purchase of new rolling stock, subject to Government funding. This upgrade is a prerequisite for any future extension
- Subject to funding the earliest we could submit a Transport & Works Act Order is 2028.