

On the WAGN

Newsletter of Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail Users Group

December 1999

Help for neglected stations

A help point and closed circuit TV cameras will be installed at both Cambridge Heath and London Fields stations in the next few months, following appeals to WAGN managers by representatives of the rail users group.

The help point - like those used on the Tube - will have a double function. It will allow passengers to find out what is going on when trains are not running to the timetable and it will allow them to call for assistance in an emergency.

But recognising that people need more reassurance about their personal safety, WAGN is also planning to fit CCTV. At the moment, we do not have a definite date for that, but we hope it will be soon.

The company also recognises that the stations need better information on train running and they are getting quotes for the cost of fitting long-line public address equipment which would allow staff - probably at Hackney Downs - to make additional announcements for Cambridge Heath and London Fields. This more pro-active attitude at WAGN emerged when Ray King, Graham Larkbey, Hackney Council's Roger Blake and Tower Hamlets Council's Tony Davis met Mike Stewart, Tom Joyner and Naomi Turnbull of WAGN at Liverpool Street station on 15 November.

Before CCTV is fitted, group station manager Tom Joyner will invite user group representatives for a "walk-round of the stations", so that their opinion can be obtained about the optimum siting of the cameras. Tony Davis raised the point that, during times of disruption he had been unable to get through to Customer Relations, and was concerned that a similar problem would occur with the Help Points. Mike Stewart undertook to look at the staffing of the help points and also the possibility of introducing a pre-recorded message system that would deal with the most common enquiries.

We pointed out that there are not enough poster boards at any of the stations, particularly at platform level, but Mike and Tom pointed out that poster boards are frequently vandalised, and therefore expensive to maintain.

WAGN is considering providing more and better poster sites but may take up an offer from the users group to provide at least some of the information for them.

WAGN recognises that the stations are currently poorly maintained, and that there is an urgent need for them to be made more

What Cambridge Heath and London Fields will get:

- Help point
- CCTV
- Ticket machines
- Mirror on blind corner

What we might get:

- Public address system
- Flower baskets

What we still want:

- Information screens
- More frequent trains
- Evening trains
- Saturday trains
- Sunday trains

welcoming and safer for passengers.

We said lighter colour paint would make the stations appear more cheerful, and would also help to reflect light in the stairwells and underpass.

Mike Stewart undertook to provide timescales for the repainting of the stations and he also agreed to look into the cost and practicalities of providing floral baskets to improve the appearance of the stations!

Lighting is recognised as a serious issue at all stations. The lights have failed completely several times at Bethnal Green, and there are frequently broken lights in the other stations. There will be a concerted attempt to respond to these problems more quickly.

A further problem is that, being unstaffed, it may take some time for faults to be noticed at

TV eye

The reputation of Cambridge Heath as one of the worst stations in Britain has attracted the interest of two TV companies. Both Belgian TV and Channel 5 have filmed the station in all its "glory" and interviewed a CHLFUG representative on site.

the stations. Tom Joyner is hoping to arrange for regular visits to the stations from the supervisors at Hackney Downs. This is subject to the agreement of staff at Hackney Downs. The graffiti was recognised as a problem at both stations. Cleaning contracts are currently up for tender and it is WAGN's intention that the new contracts will include provision for offensive graffiti to be covered within two hours of reporting and all other graffiti to be covered within 24 hours. Mike Stewart will provide current figures on the annual cost of removing graffiti.

The possibility of enlisting local schools and colleges to paint murals was raised and will be explored.

The damp problem at Cambridge Heath and London Fields, where the floor tiles become very slippery when it rains, was also recognised. We asked for handrails to be installed and handrails and stair risers to be painted yellow for the benefit of visually impaired passengers.

WAGN agreed to provide a mirror on the blind corner on the stairwell at Cambridge Heath. We also asked WAGN to consider reopening the blocked-up entrance from Cambridge Heath station into Hackney Road.

We said there was increasing potential for the stations and asked for the service to be enhanced, particularly on weekday evenings after 8pm and at weekends.

The Empire theatre, the Sunday street markets and the plans for a new music centre, museum and library at Hackney, should generate considerable traffic for WAGN. Mike Stewart pointed out that he was not responsible for service provision, but would bring these points to the attention of the timetable and operating planners.

We plan to seek another meeting to make the case for a better train service.

WAGN is also planning to instal ticket machines, probably outside the stations to minimise the problems of vandalism and theft. This is particularly pressing with the introduction of ticket gates at Liverpool Street. We pointed out the advertising potential for WAGN of the bridge at Cambridge Heath station. WAGN is considering a suggestion from Roger Blake that London Fields station should have the words "for Mare Street" added to indicate to passengers that this is the closest station to Hackney town centre.

We also asked WAGN to consider letting out office accommodation on the station.

Cinderella can come home from the ball

WAGN is to provide rail services to allow people attending Millennium celebrations in central London to get home to Hackney in the early hours of New Year's Day.

On Saturday 1 January 2000, trains will leave Liverpool Street at 23 and 53 minutes past the hour, commencing at 01.23 and ending at 03.53.

They will arrive at Cambridge Heath at 28 and 58, and at London Fields at 30 and 00 minutes past the hour.

But remember

The last train into Liverpool Street on Friday 31 December 1999 is at 19.28 (London Fields) or 19.30 (Cambridge Heath)

There is no service into Liverpool Street at any time on 1 January 2000.

There is no service to Cambridge Heath or London Fields after 03.53

There is no service at Cambridge Heath and London Fields on Sunday 2 January 2000 or Monday 3 January

CAMBRIDGE HEATH DEPARTURES

Trains to **Enfield Town** depart at the following times (Monday to Friday)

0556, 0624, 0654, 0724, 0754, 0830, 0900, 0930, 1000, 1030, 1100, 1130, 1200, 1230, 1300, 1330, 1400, 1430,
1500, 1530, 1600, 1629, 1648, 1703, 1718, 1733, 1748, 1803, 1818, 1833, 1848, 1903, 1927

Saturday, Sunday and public holidays: No service

All trains call at London Fields, Hackney Downs, Rectory Road, Stoke Newington, Stamford Hill, Seven Sisters, Bruce Grove, Silver Street, White Hart Lane, Edmonton Green and Bush Hill Park

CAMBRIDGE HEATH DEPARTURES

Trains to **Liverpool Street** depart at the following times (Monday to Friday)

0622, 0652, 0723, 0738, 0753, 0808, 0823, 0838, 0853, 0911, 0930, 0959, 1029, 1059, 1129, 1159, 1229, 1259,
1329, 1359, 1429, 1459, 1529, 1559, 1629, 1659, 1729, 1800, 1830, 1900, 1930.

Saturday and Sunday: No service

All trains call at Bethnal Green

This timetable is provided by a voluntary group, Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail Users, 4 Christchurch Square E9 7HU 09.99 25b

Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail Users Group is campaigning for better local rail services

We managed to persuade WAGN to reinstate the off-peak trains and now we are promised help points, closed circuit television cameras and ticket machines.

**But we still want: 1 Evening trains 2 Saturday trains 3 Sunday trains
4 Train-running information screens on the platforms**

If you support these aims, please fill in the slip below, so we can
a. Give WAGN accurate information about the demand b. Keep you informed.

**Please do not fill in this form, if you filled one in earlier this year or last.
We already have your details on file.**

Your name _____

Your address _____

Telephone _____ Fax _____ email _____

Please return to CHLFUG, 4 Christchurch Square, London E9 7HU

The more support we get, the more we can achieve.

If you would like to take a more active role in the campaign, please tick here _____

ch 12.99