

On the WAGN

Newsletter of Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail Users Group

May 2001

It's our party

After years of campaigning for a better service, we have decided to have a party to celebrate one of our biggest achievements.

From Monday 21 May onwards, with the start of the summer service, Monday-Friday trains will be stopping half-hourly at both Cambridge Heath and London Fields all through the evening until about midnight.

Not only that - on Saturdays, from 26 May onwards, there will also be a half-hourly train service all day until about midnight. (At present, of course, our stations have no Saturday service at all).

So on the evening of 21 May, we are holding a "launch event", followed by a few drinks to celebrate at the Pub on the Park near London Fields station.

Please come and join us. Everyone who uses the stations will be welcome. We will meet

outside Cambridge Heath station around 19.45, then take the 20.00 train to London Fields - the first "new" train of our new evening timetable! - and walk to the Pub on the Park from there.

Or you can meet us at the pub if you prefer. It's in Martello Street - under the railway bridge from London Fields station.

We hope to provide a little music to entertain you and we have invited councillors and officials from Hackney, Tower Hamlets and the Greater London Authority, as well as managers from WAGN. So you might get a chance to talk to some of the people who make decisions which affect the kind of service we will be getting in future.

We're afraid you will have to buy your own drinks as CHLFUG has no money - but if you decide to stay late at the pub, there will be a train until midnight to take you home!

Things are looking up

Our two stations once had a superb service - with trains every five or ten minutes as far back as the 1920s.

There is no reason why, with thousands of people living within a short walk from the two stations, there should not be a similar service today.

Unfortunately, British Rail was so short of money that it decided it was not worth providing for the relatively short journeys which brought in less revenue than trains for longer journeys from outside London. Services declined and the two stations

suffered. Even when the Greater London Council under Ken Livingstone decided to try to resurrect the "Jazz Trains", the service was too unreliable to win over the many passengers who had by then deserted the trains.

Vandals also bear much of the blame for the poor state of the stations and the unwelcoming atmosphere, and in the past there have been several arson attacks at both stations.

Now WAGN has a more positive attitude than previous regimes and things are looking more promising - though all the

problems have not been solved, We still need a Sunday service, information systems so you know when the next train is coming, and CCTV to make passengers feel more secure.

We also need a 15-minute interval service all day and all evening like the other stations on the line.

We're getting there - but we're not there yet!

If you would like to take a more active part in CHLFUG, write, email or just come along on 21 May.