

THE UP LINE

NEWSLETTER OF CAMBRIDGE HEATH AND LONDON FIELDS RAIL USERS

DECEMBER 2011

Times they are a-changing

Passengers using Cambridge Heath and London Fields stations should be aware that some trains are being cut from December 2011.

The cuts affect a few trains in the morning and evening peaks, although the basic all-day pattern of services remains the same. The changes come into effect with the new timetable from Sunday 11 December.

National Express East Anglia has responded to our representations and the cuts are not as severe as they might have been.

Cambridge Heath loses six trains in the London-bound morning peak, gains a train in the ex-London morning peak and loses two trains in the ex-London evening peak.

London Fields loses one train in the London-bound morning peak, gains one in the ex-London morning peak and loses one in the ex-London evening peak.

Elsewhere, NXEA has actually managed to introduce "significant additional capacity on peak services into Liverpool Street". All our peak-hour trains should be eight cars rather than four in future.

But come 5 February, NXEA is being replaced as our local operator by Abellio Greater Anglia which is owned by Dutch Railways and which already runs (with Serco) Merseyrail and Northern Rail, as well as some bus

services in London. NXEA introduced 30 new trains on its network to "provide a major enhancement to the quality of service provided for many customers". Abellio however agreed to cut the train fleet (by losing nine older trains) in its franchise bid.

NXEA failed to respond to our requests to improve the poor Sunday services at our stations and we are hoping Abellio will prove more accommodating.

We have found that the level of usage per train on a Sunday is about the same as on a weekday in the off peak.

Our regular passenger counts suggest that with a more frequent Sunday service, such as stopping the Hertford East services at our stations, passenger numbers would rise to match.

The state of our stations continues to cause concern although London Fields looks much better than it did a few years ago, thanks to a new entrance, new information screens, poster boards and signs, much of it paid for via Hackney Council's section 106 grants from developers.

We want the overall standards at our two stations to match those of the London Overground. At the moment, they are far from it.

Both stations have been given a rudimentary paint job which still leaves Cambridge Heath looking like a poor relation with paint peeling off the ceilings and unfinished plaster repairs.

We are pleased though that British Transport Police continues to take an active interest in our stations.

Our stations and the rail network in general have been plagued by metal and cable theft, an increasing cause of delayed and cancelled trains. Passengers might consider signing an e-petition calling for Government action: <http://epetitions.direct.gov.uk/petitions/21165>

Neither of our stations has permanent staff and the McNulty report into railway costs is suggesting that many other stations, including Hackney Wick, Homerton, Rectory Road, Stamford Hill and Stoke Newington should lose their ticket offices, and staff should be cut at Hackney Central, Dalston Kingsland and Clapton.

This threat to other Hackney stations has prompted the formation of a "Staff Our Stations" campaign. It is organising a public meeting at the Old Fire Station, 61 Leswin Road, Stoke Newington N16 7NX at 18.30 on Monday 12 December 2011. For more information: www.togetherfortransport.org

Still growing

Morning peak passenger numbers at Cambridge Heath went up by 11% over the year to May. Overall numbers at both stations grew by an average of 4.8% over the year. Given the poor service, Sunday patronage at both stations is good.

LOCAL AIR POLLUTION REGULARLY BREAKS EUROPEAN UNION LIMITS

Making progress with the CHLFUG campaign

Improvements since the CHLFUG campaign began:

Off-peak, evening, Saturday and Sunday trains. Oyster card readers, better ticket machines with Oyster top-up facilities. Real-time information screens at street level at London Fields. Help points on all platforms. Passenger information system. Live monitoring of CCTV at London Fields. Telephone in London Fields foyer. Platform seats. More timetables and printed information. Re-painting. Improved lighting. Efficient graffiti removal. New signs. Cambridge Heath needle bin removed. Stair edge repairs. Litter collection. Additional entrance at London Fields.

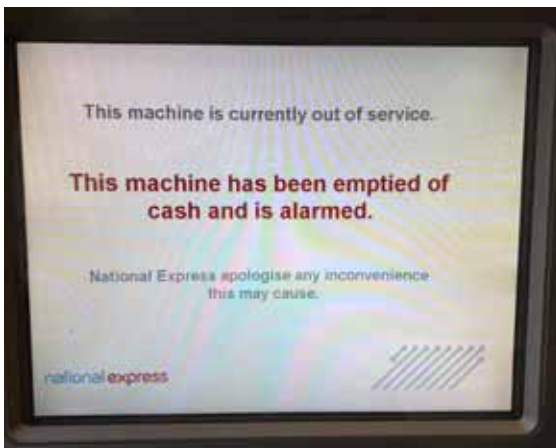
Our aspirations for now and the future:

A good Sunday service. Direct trains to Walthamstow and Chingford. Periodic heavy clean of the stations. Resurfacing stairs to provide an easy-clean surface. Reliable ticket machines and Oyster readers. A regular service every 10 to 15 minutes, every day of the week. Real-time train information screens at street level and live monitoring of CCTV at Cambridge Heath. Ticket machines providing a full range of tickets, including PlusBus. Additional station entrance at Cambridge Heath to improve access and safety. Ramps on stairs for cycles. Passenger lifts. Public address system.

ROOM FOR IMPROVEMENT



OUT OF ORDER: Ticket machine on 7 November 2011



OUT OF ORDER AGAIN: Ticket machine on 21 November 2011



AFTER THE PAINT JOB!
The roof of the entrance hall at Cambridge Heath station, above

AFTER THE PAINT JOB!
At the top of the stairs on the down platform of Cambridge Heath station, left