

THE UP LINE

NEWSLETTER OF CAMBRIDGE HEATH AND LONDON FIELDS RAIL USERS

APRIL 2014

New trains on the way

The 30-year-old trains used on services to Cambridge Heath and London Fields are to be replaced.

The London Overground, which takes over the Liverpool Street services to Enfield, Cheshunt and Chingford in May next year, has started the process of buying trains.

The new trains will not be ready when Transport for London takes over next year, but they are likely to be similar to the trains already running on the London Overground, with walk-through coaches and air conditioning.

Until the new rolling stock arrives in 2017, TfL plans to “refresh” the existing West Anglia train fleet, including deep cleaning. We believe designers of the new trains should modify the Overground seat pattern to suit our line.

On the Overground all the seats are on the sides of the train, facing in, but on the Underground’s Metropolitan line, there is a mix of bay seating and longitudinal seating. The Metropolitan style would be the best pattern for our line, as there is less need for standing space and it gives more



Picture: Spemiler, Chris McKenna, Joshua Brown and Mattbuck

GOOD COMPROMISE: London Underground’s new Metropolitan line trains have space for seat bays

space for people to be seated. Although services on our line will be handed over to the Overground next year, Abellio Greater Anglia has been given an extension of its contract for other services from Liverpool Street to East Anglia from July to October 2016. It claims it has agreed to an enhanced “heavy clean” programme



No seat bays: An Overground train

for trains and stations. It will be interesting to see whether things improve on West Anglia between July and May next year.

Improvements needed

We welcome the prospect of new trains, but there are plenty of other improvements needed.

We plan to ask Transport for London to consider the following:

Changes needed at Cambridge Heath

1. Train information screen at ground level, as at London Fields, Stoke Newington and Rectory Road stations.
2. Reinstatement, in the short term, of the six peak hour trains at Cambridge Heath (that were cut in December 2011 and which led directly to a fall in passenger numbers).
3. Second entrance on Hackney Road, to augment the existing entrance on Cambridge Heath Road.
4. Live monitoring of the CCTV, as at London Fields station.
5. Tree on forecourt to be pruned.
6. Keeping forecourt clear of rubbish.
7. Ground floor retail unit to be let.
8. Re-branding of station frontage, including name and logo on Hackney Road bridge as at Hackney Central.

Changes needed at both Cambridge Heath and London Fields stations

1. A proper daily cleaning regime, backed up by a regular heavy clean.
2. Staff in attendance while trains operate.
3. A better Sunday service. At least every 15 minutes, rather than every 30 minutes now.
4. In the long term, improved timetable to provide a train every 10 minutes rather than every 15 minutes as at present.
5. Stopping some Chingford trains at Cambridge Heath and London Fields to provide a direct service to and from Walthamstow, without the need to change trains at Hackney Downs.
6. Lifts at both stations to help mobility-impaired passengers, including parents with push chairs and passengers with cycles.

7. More reliable ticket machines which are currently often out of order.
8. Designating Cambridge Heath and London Fields as art stations, to reflect the large artistic community in the area.
9. Encouraging artists to use the stations to display their art.
10. Public address system.
11. Additional platform shelters and seats, to cope with rising passenger numbers.

These changes are suggested by Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail Users for the attention of Jonathan Fox (Director of London Rail) and Mike Stubbs (Director Overground) of Transport for London.

They will also be circulated to local politicians who have shown an interest in train services.

We believe the changes should be given careful consideration before the train services are transferred from Abellio Greater Anglia to Transport for London on 31 May 2015.

We expect TfL to give assurances that it has considered the suggestions and can implement some or all of them in time for the start of the new operation.

We are unhappy that the “official” passenger use figures from the Office of Rail Regulation (based on estimates) seriously underestimate use of the two stations, as judged by our carefully recorded observations.

We believe the ORR 2012-2013 estimate for annual use of London Fields (496,262) should be 1,000,000 while the ORR estimate for Cambridge Heath (296,692) should be 600,000.

What changes do YOU want?

Please email editor@railwatch.org.uk if there are other things we should be campaigning for.