

THE UP LINE

NEWSLETTER OF CAMBRIDGE HEATH AND LONDON FIELDS RAIL USERS

SEPTEMBER 2019

Ten times growth

New passengers are continuing to boost the numbers using Cambridge Heath and London Fields stations.

Since volunteers starting counting passengers in 1996, overall numbers at both stations have grown tenfold, with London Fields at nearly 12 times higher and Cambridge Heath nearly eight times higher.

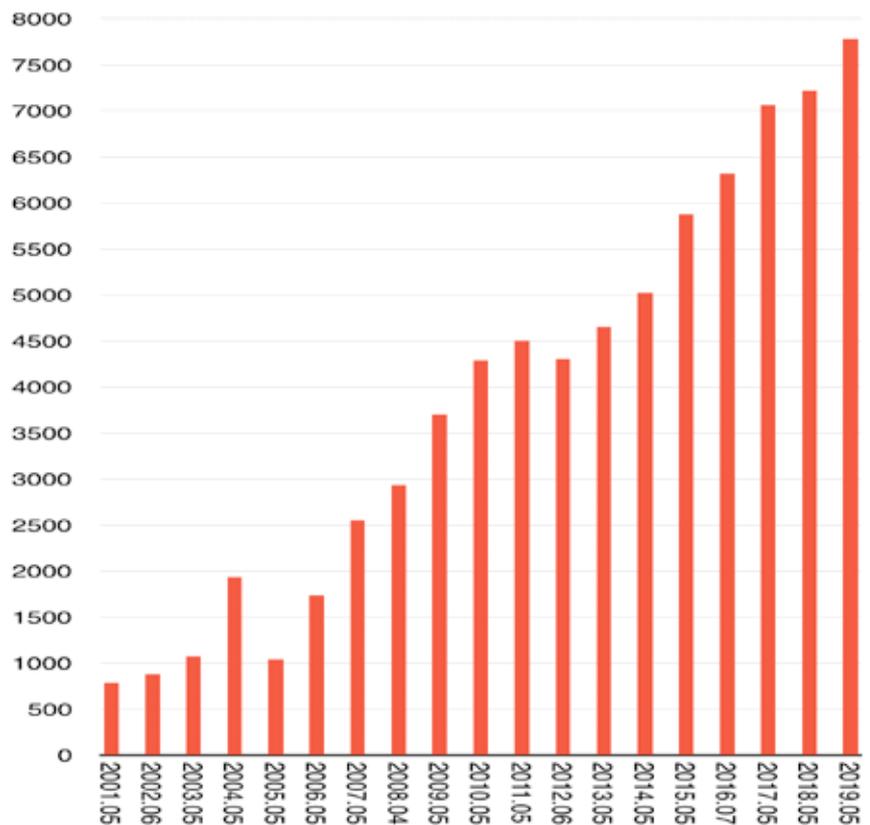
Our May 2019 count showed that both stations achieved their highest-ever passenger figures – with 2,959 a day at Cambridge Heath and 3,429 a day at London Fields.

The counts were taken from the first train in the morning to around 19.30.

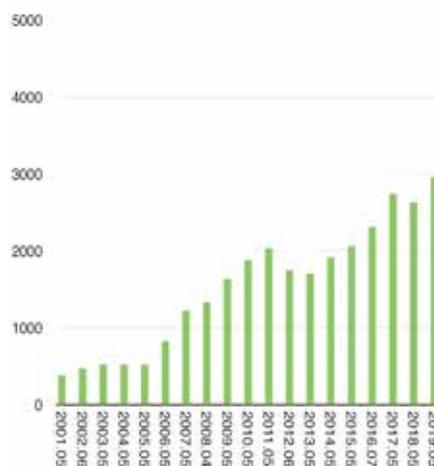
The number of passengers has continued to grow fairly consistently since the West Anglia services were taken over by London Overground in May 2015.

Cuts to early morning trains at Cambridge Heath caused a temporary dip in numbers but the figures are recovering even though the timetable changes have created some inconvenient gaps in service in the morning peak.

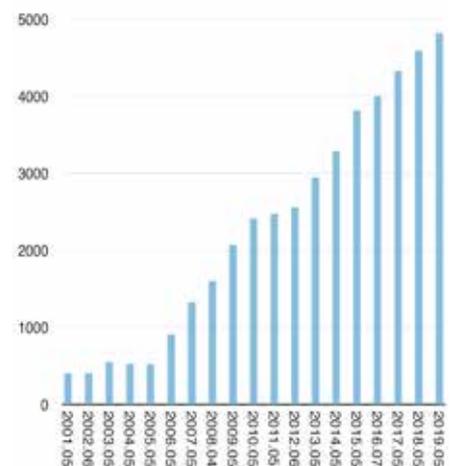
Both stations have seen impressive improvements but passengers remind us of the need for lifts to make the stations accessible to all.



IMPRESSIVE PROGRESS: Both stations 2001-2019



CAMBRIDGE HEATH



LONDON FIELDS

Improvements needed

We look forward to the promised new trains, but plenty of other improvements are needed.

We asked Transport for London to consider installing train information screens at ground level at Cambridge Heath, as at London Fields, Hackney Downs, Stoke Newington and Rectory Road stations. TfL responded and the screens were installed and welcomed by passengers.

Changes needed at Cambridge Heath

1. Reinstatement of the six peak hour trains (five in the morning and one in the evening) at Cambridge Heath cut in December 2011 which led to a fall in passenger numbers.
2. Ground floor retail unit to be let.
3. Station name and logo on Hackney Road bridge as at Hackney Central.
4. Second entrance on Hackney Road, to augment the existing entrance on Cambridge Heath Road.

Changes needed at both Cambridge Heath and London Fields stations

1. Lifts at both stations to help mobility-impaired passengers, including parents with buggies and small children as well as passengers with cycles and luggage.
2. Additional platform shelters and seats to cope with rising passenger numbers.
3. An earlier start to the Sunday service, from 07.00, rather than 09.00.
4. 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. Designate Cambridge Heath and London Fields as art stations, to reflect the artistic community in the area and brighten up the stations.

7. Encourage artists to use the stations to display their art.

What changes do YOU want?

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

These changes are suggested by Cambridge Heath and London Fields Rail Users for the attention of Gareth Powell, managing director for surface transport, and Jon Fox, director of London Rail. They will also be circulated to local politicians who have shown an interest in train services.

We are unhappy that the “official” estimates from the Office of Rail and Road still seriously understate the real use of our two stations, when compared with our carefully recorded observations.

We believe the ORR 2017-2018 estimates of 1,324,774 passengers using London Fields annually and 774,528 for Cambridge Heath are significantly below the actual numbers. This underestimate undermines the case for improving our stations and the train services.

Improvements since the CHLFUG campaign began:

Daytime off-peak, evening, Saturday and Sunday trains. Oyster card readers, and more reliable ticket machines with Oyster top-up facilities. Real-time information screens at street level as well as customer information screens and Help points on all platforms. Live monitoring of CCTV at London Fields and Cambridge Heath. 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 and efficient cleaning. Additional entrance at London Fields. Refurbishment of Cambridge Heath station. Public address system. Station staff while trains are running