

REGIONAL REVIEW: JUNE 2022

STOCK NOTES

Class 69: 69005, which is in traditional BR green livery with white lining, as applied to class 33, has been named *Eastleigh*.

Class 395: It is intended to refurbish the interiors of the units and to introduce regenerative braking, at least when working on HS1.

Class 455: Further moves from Stewarts Lane to Newport for scrapping have been 455821/45 on 30 May, 455818/32 on 1 June, 455505/08 on 7 June, 455802/29 on 9 June.

Class 701: 701007 was moved from Eastleigh to store at Worksop on 6 June. 701047 was delivered from Derby to Eastleigh on 7 June.

Class 769: Units 769937/44 were moved from Eastleigh to Long Marston on 30 May, followed by 769936/40 on 10 June. The units were supposed to be in passenger service from spring 2019, but continuing problems with those operated by Transport for Wales and Northern, which do not have the complication of third rail capability, suggest that classes 165 and 166 will be operating to Redhill and Gatwick for some time to come.

TIMETABLES AND DIAGRAMS

Freight: Car traffic to Southampton Eastern Docks from Jaguar at Castle Bromwich has ceased. Halling Sidings have been reactivated to serve a plant making concrete sleepers. Trial trips between Halling and Hoo Junction, worked by Colas, started in June.

INTERESTING WORKINGS

Class 37: 37510 hauled a rake of Mark 4 carriages for Transport for Wales from Eastleigh Works to Swansea Landore via Chandlers Ford and Westbury on 18 June.

Class 201: An excursion from Hastings to Skegness on 18 June was to be worked by unit 1001. Unfortunately, the fire bottles discharged in one of the engine rooms, for no apparent reason, requiring the train to terminate at Tunbridge Wells and return to Hastings. The train could not continue without the fire suppression system being available.

Class 455: Units 5729+5858 made a test trip from Wimbledon to Basingstoke and back on 1 June. Class 455 units pass through Basingstoke regularly, to and from overhaul at Bournemouth, but Basingstoke as destination is unusual.

Special trains: A Locomotive Services charter ran from Llandrindod to Weymouth via Cardiff and Yeovil Pen Mill on 22 May, worked by 37521 and 37688. It continued from Weymouth to Crewe via Southampton and Oxford on 24 May. A trip with the Belmond Pullman train on 18 June, from Victoria to Exeter out via Newbury and back via the LSWR main line, was hauled by 50007, masquerading as 50034 on one side.

Ascot: The customary additional trains ran between Waterloo and Ascot between 14 and 18 June for the Royal Ascot race meeting. The Northern Belle came from Manchester Victoria via Banbury on 16 June, worked top and tail by 47815 and 57314.

RAILWAY BUSINESS

Go Ahead Group, the majority owner of Govia Thameslink Railway, has recommended that its shareholders accept a takeover bid from Australian bus company Kinetic and transport infrastructure investors Globalvia. The £648M offer values Go Ahead at 24% more than its stock market value.

Elizabeth Line: During the first two weeks of operation 2.5 million people used the new service between Abbey Wood and Paddington. On-time reliability was over 98%, but the trains were operating without interface with any other services. Through trains from Abbey Wood to Heathrow and to Reading are expected to start running in the autumn.

STRIKE SERVICES

The RMT union called strikes of Network Rail staff and many employed by train operators, including Southeastern and South Western Railway, but not Island Line, on 21, 23 and 25 June, in relation to pay and claimed job cuts. Govia Thameslink Railway employees voted for action short of going on strike. A few trains operated on strike days between about 07:30 and 18:30, with managers staffing signalling centres. Services were subject to disruption either side of strike days. There were problems staffing Canterbury electric control room on 21 June, resulting in power being off on all lines. Services east of Rainham and Ashford were to start up over a period of seven hours on 22 June, while power was restored line by line. Switching the power off can be achieved quite quickly, but restoring it safely takes some time.

The service on 21 June, which differed slightly from what was advertised in advance, was:

Southeastern: Two trains per hour, unless shown otherwise, on the following routes:

- London Bridge and Dartford via Greenwich
- London Bridge and Dartford via Bexleyheath
- London Bridge and Dartford via Lewisham and Sidcup
- London Bridge and Orpington via Lewisham (four trains per hour)

Maze Hill, Westcombe Park, Woolwich Dockyard, Falconwood, Lee and Mottingham stations were closed. There were trains every fifteen minutes St Pancras to Ebbsfleet, with alternate trains continuing to Ashford.

Southern: Two trains per hour on the following routes:

- Victoria, Clapham Junction and all stations Balham to Sutton via Mitcham Junction
- Victoria and all stations to Epsom Downs via Selhurst
- Victoria and all stations except Wandsworth Common to West Croydon via Crystal Palace
- London Bridge, East Croydon and all stations to Tattenham Corner
- Victoria, Clapham Junction, East Croydon, Gatwick Airport, Haywards Heath and Brighton
- Brighton and Hove

Thameslink: Two trains per hour on the following routes south of the Thames:

- London Bridge, East Croydon and all stations from Gatwick Airport to Brighton
- London Bridge, East Croydon and all stations from Coulsdon South to Three Bridges
- London Bridge, Norwood Junction, East Croydon, Purley and all stations from Redhill to Gatwick Airport

South Western Railway: There was a normal service on the Isle of Wight and the following elsewhere:

- Waterloo, Vauxhall and all stations Clapham Junction to Windsor via Hounslow, four trains per hour
- Waterloo, Clapham Junction, Wimbledon, Surbiton and all stations to Woking, four trains per hour
- Waterloo, Clapham Junction, Surbiton, Woking and all stations to Basingstoke, half hourly
- Waterloo, Clapham Junction, Woking, Basingstoke, Winchester, Eastleigh, Southampton Airport Parkway, Southampton Central, half hourly

London Overground: East London Line services were advertised to run half-hourly to all destinations, but there were many cancellations. No LO trains ran to Crystal Palace and hardly any to New Cross. Many Clapham Junction and West Croydon trains were cancelled during the morning.

Elizabeth Line: Trains ran every five minutes between Abbey Wood and Paddington, as usual, but with the earlier start and later finish.

Great Western did not run between Reading and Gatwick or between Westbury and Portsmouth, but there was an hourly local service between Reading and Basingstoke. **CrossCountry** ran trains every two hours between Southampton Central and Birmingham or Manchester.

Freight: A few freight trains operated to and from Southampton via Didcot. The West London Line saw a few trains to and from Dollands Moor and a number of aggregate terminals. There was no traffic from the Somerset quarries via Romsey.

PERFORMANCE and INCIDENTS

Figures show the percentage of trains arriving within 59 seconds of scheduled time, at all monitored stations. The ranking of the companies within the 24 passenger train operators is shown. Eurostar is not included, but open access operators are. MAA = moving annual average.

	1 to 30 April	MAA to 30 April	1 to 29 May	MAA to 29 May
All TOCs	74.1%	72.6%	72.8%	72.1%
SWR	76.2% (8 th)	74.0% (=8 th)	75.5% (7 th)	73.7% (9 th)
GTR	74.6% (12 th)	74.3% (7 th)	75.3% (8 th)	73.9% (8 th)
SE	76.1% (=9 th)	71.3% (10 th)	72.7% (11 th)	71.1% (10 th)

The Office of Rail and Road has recalculated the performance figures for April, so these are restated. The originally published figure for GTR looked too good to be true – and it was!

Wednesday 25 May: A points failure at Ashurst resulted in the 09:33 from Uckfield not departing until 11:11 and terminating at East Croydon. The 09:07 from London Bridge was diverted to East Grinstead. The 11:07 from London Bridge ran, but the 13:07 was cancelled. Normal service resumed with the 15:07.

Friday 27 May: Trains were halted after a herd of cows got onto the line at Godalming about 07:00. Services were suspended for the rest of the day after the 20:58 from Waterloo was involved in a fatality near Kingston. Shepperton trains were diverted via Richmond.

Saturday 28 May: Damaged signal cables and blown fuses at Dover Priory caused all services to be suspended from 11:40. Trains terminated at Folkestone Central or Shepherds Well, or were diverted via Canterbury West. A few trains ran from the middle of the afternoon, but not via Deal.

Sunday 29 May: Trains were diverted via Sidcup all morning after a body was found on the line at Barnehurst.

Tuesday 31 May: A signalling fault resulted in trains between Farnham and Guildford being cancelled for most of the morning.

Friday 3 June: Services through Sutton were cancelled or delayed from 16:00 because of a points failure that prevented trains running towards Epsom or St Helier. Services towards Epsom resumed by 18:00, with the points clamped, but normal working did not resume until 20:30 after repairs had been carried out.

Saturday 4 June: A signal failure at Bedhampton caused numerous Southern services to be cancelled or curtailed throughout the morning. A tree came down onto the railway near Bexhill about 11:00. Some late afternoon trains were diverted via Chertsey, while a trespasser was removed from the line at Weybridge. A points failure at Barnes resulted in most trains being diverted via Hounslow after 19:30, including some Kingston trains which reversed at Twickenham. Later in the evening Kingston services were able to run via Richmond, but other trains continued via Hounslow.

Monday 6 June: A points failure at Motspur Park during the morning peak resulted in trains from the down slow line only being able to run towards Kingston. Stopping trains to Surbiton had to use the line from Wimbledon to Surbiton, so were unable to call at Raynes Park, New Malden and Berrylands. The empty aggregate train from Ardingly to Acton Yard failed near Balcombe about 10:15. It managed to move slowly onto the up slow line at Balcombe Tunnel Junction by 10:45, but passenger services were badly disrupted.

Tuesday 7 June: A track circuit failure caused problems at Waterloo from late morning. Platforms 1 to 3 were out of use for about 2½ hours from 11:30.

Wednesday 8 June: Platform D at Waterloo East was closed for repairs all day so trains on the up fast line had to pass through without stopping. These are mostly main line and Hayes trains. A track defect at Beckenham Junction resulted in the down main line being closed from 16:00. Trains scheduled to terminate and start at Bromley South were cancelled and other down trains were diverted via Catford for the rest of the day.

Thursday 9 June: A points failure prevented use of the down Kent fast line and platform 7 at London Bridge from 17:00. The resulting congestion caused cancellations and significant delays. Some Charing Cross trains were diverted to Cannon Street and a few main line trains ran to Victoria.

Friday 10 June: Some late morning trains were cancelled or diverted via the Quarry line, following a points failure at Redhill. Adding to the disruption, the 11:00 from Reigate failed at Merstham and terminated there.

Saturday 11 June: A cable fault at New Beckenham resulted in loss of traction power about 06:00, stranding the 05:54 from Hayes between Elmers End and Clock House. There were no trains between Lewisham and Hayes until 11:00. The 07:33 Waterloo to Guildford failed at Raynes Park and terminated there. Two road vehicles collided on West Barnes Lane level crossing (Motspur Park) about 08:30, resulting in the line being closed for two hours. Most trains were cancelled, but Guildford services were diverted via Cobham.

Sunday 12 June: A fire in a building on the west side of Guildford station about 16:00 caused all lines to be blocked and current isolated. Three fire engines attended. Platforms 4, 5 and 6 were re-opened by 17:00, but platforms 7 and 8 were closed until late evening. Several Portsmouth trains were diverted via Winchester.

Tuesday 14 June: A track circuit failure resulted in there being no trains between Uckfield and Crowborough until the 13:06 from London Bridge.

Wednesday 15 June: There were no trains from Hampton Court between 07:23 and 11:54, because of a points failure at Hampton Court Junction.

Friday 17 June: A power failure at St Leonards depot prevented trains leaving to take up service, resulting in cancellations on the Hastings line. A signalling failure on the main lines between Waterloo and Vauxhall resulted in Shepperton trains being diverted via Richmond and delays to other suburban services until the middle of the afternoon. A fire on the track at Sutton about 10:20 put the main lines out of use and damaged signalling equipment. Lines to and from Epsom soon re-opened, but it was not possible for Thameslink to run from Sutton to Wimbledon for the rest of the day. Trains running via Tooting, then St Helier, were able to operate normally, but those in the opposite direction were cancelled or terminated at Sutton.

Saturday 18 June: A signalling failure at Swale resulted in there being no trains to Sheerness between the 11:48 from Sittingbourne and the 16:48. Unfortunately, the problem recurred, causing a further three hour gap in the service soon after 18:00. An Eastleigh to Sutton engineer's train, hauled by 66782, failed near Sutton Common about 15:00, blocking the line for about two hours.

Sunday 19 June: An engineers' train failed between St Margarets and Mortlake, resulting in trains being cancelled or diverted via Hounslow until 10:00. A power failure, affecting signalling and level crossings between Willingdon Junction and Cooden Beach, resulted in the line being closed from 13:00 and not reopening until after 19:00 on Monday.

Monday 20 June: The Mountfield gypsum train failed at High Brooms caused many early morning trains to be cancelled.

AROUND THE REGION

Thanet Parkway: Work on the new station, between Minster and Ramsgate, is well advanced. It is not expected to come into use until May 2023 after signalling and level crossings have been altered to allow for the revised service. Cliffsend level crossing is being upgraded from automatic half barriers (AHB) to CCTV supervised full barriers. The control system at Sevenscore AHB crossing, west of the new station, has to distinguish between up trains that are calling at Thanet Parkway and those that are non-stop, so will reach the crossing sooner. Line speed changes will allow trains to call at the new station without increasing overall journey time.

Platinum Jubilee: Events to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee included street parties at London Bridge, Waterloo and Windsor & Eton Riverside stations. There were also special events at Charing Cross and Victoria. A life-size knitted Queen visited Battle, Tunbridge Wells, Robertsbridge and Hastings.

Murals: Painted murals by Lionel Stanhope continue to be applied to bridge abutments and parapets in South London. Some are sponsored by Network Rail and others by community groups. Locations include Barnes Bridge, Birkbeck, Brixton, Brockley, Catford (2), Charing Cross, Charlton, Chessington North, Clapham, Forest Hill, Herne Hill, Hither Green, Ladywell, Lee, Malden Manor, North Dulwich (Burbage Road), Nunhead, Plumstead, Purley, Selhurst, Shortlands, South Bermondsey (Zampa Road), Sutton, Thornton Heath, Tolworth, Tulse Hill, Waterloo, Waterloo East (Cornwall Road), West Norwood and Worcester Park. Many of these take the form of a BR-style totem sign with the station name, though that at South Bermondsey reads 'Millwall FC'. Further afield, there are Stanhope murals at Arundel, Snodland and Three Bridges. Are there others?

Denmark Hill: Although Denmark Hill station has been extensively refurbished, the station master's house, on the north side of the line, remains boarded up and derelict internally. Thankfully, there are now plans for it to be renovated and returned to use.

Ticket gates: Southern is increasing the number of ticket gates where passengers can scan eTickets on their mobile phones. Stations recently equipped to allow this include Angmering, Ashted, Barnham, Bexhill, Bognor Regis, Dorking, East Grinstead, Haywards Heath, Lancing, Leatherhead, Littlehampton, Polegate and Reigate. It is estimated that half of the train tickets sold in Great Britain are now digital. Southeastern is to introduce similar eTicket readers at its stations.

Hassocks: A new subway for pedestrians and cyclists, replacing Woodside foot crossing north of Hassocks, has come into use. New housing would have made the crossing much busier and the developer contributed to the cost of the subway. The subway structure was installed during the February 2022 closure of the line between Haywards Heath and Brighton. Part of the embankment was removed and pre-cast concrete sections positioned to form the subway. The subway opened after paths to it were complete.

Ryde: The line along Ryde Pier is to be closed for about twelve weeks during the autumn. This is to allow repairs to the pier and to Ryde Pier Head station. Both the platform and the weather screen are to be replaced.

Shawford: Refurbishment of the station building has been completed and a café opens in July.

Hythe: Special events are planned for the weekend of 23 & 24 July to mark the centenary of the Hythe Pier Railway, which has the oldest electric trains in daily service anywhere in the world.

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