

REGIONAL REVIEW: AUGUST 2022

STOCK NOTES

Class 455: The full list of Southern class 455 scrap moves from Stewarts Lane to Newport is thus:

4 May	838+839	28 June	813+842
10 May	810+825	30 June	826+843
12 May	827+831	05 July	815+840
17 May	809+816	7 July	830+837
19 May	835+841	12 July	814+822
24 May	828+846	14 July	823+844
26 May	811+824	26 July	817+820
30 May	821+845	28 July	833+834
1 June	818+832	9 Aug	801+807
7 June	805+808	11 Aug	812+836
9 June	802+829	15 Aug	804+819
16 June	803+806		

SWR units have started going to Newport for scrapping. 5907 was hauled there from Wimbledon on 5 August.

Class 701: Unit 701049 was moved from Worksop to Eastleigh on 8 August and 701045 was returned to Derby. 701050 was hauled from Derby to Eastleigh on 17 August.

TIMETABLES AND DIAGRAMS

Maidstone East: Networkers regained workings on the Maidstone East line from 1 August, in place of some class 377/5 turns.

Wokingham: Wokingham Council is calling for trains to the town to be accelerated. The 36 mile journey from Waterloo takes over an hour, but in 1970 fast trains took 49 minutes, stopping at Staines and all stations from Ascot. The Council suggests that trains should be non-stop from Waterloo to Twickenham.

Southern: Timetable changes from 4 September are:

- Trains run half hourly until late evening between London Bridge and Beckenham Junction, but there is still no Sunday service.
- The Sunday trains between London Bridge and Crystal Palace via Tulse Hill are withdrawn.
- The London Bridge to East Croydon stopping service is diverted to Victoria via Crystal Palace.
- Fast London Bridge to Caterham trains call additionally at Norwood Junction.
- Trains between London Bridge and Caterham via Tulse Hill are cut back to East Croydon.
- Victoria to West Croydon via Crystal Palace trains do not run at the weekend or after 20:00 Monday to Friday.
- The Tattenham Corner service is cut back to hourly on Sundays.
- Trains between Victoria and Epsom (terminating) via Carshalton do not run off peak.
- Watford Junction to Clapham Junction trains are extended to East Croydon.
- Uckfield has an hourly service throughout the day on weekdays.
- Additional trains run between Brighton and Lewes at peak times and between Brighton and Hove throughout the day.
- Trains between Brighton and Hastings call additionally at London Road (Brighton) off-peak.

INTERESTING WORKINGS

Class 387: Units 387303+304, which originally worked from Fenchurch Street, ran from Hornsey to Selhurst Depot on 1 August for the wheel lathe and returned, via Three Bridges, on 9 August. 387301 went from Horney to Three Bridges for attention on 8 August and continued to Stewarts Lane the following day.

Class 33: 33025+33029 double-headed a Burton-on-Trent to Weymouth railtour, outward via Basingstoke and return via Yeovil Pen Mill, on 6 August. Although not from Waterloo, headcode 91 was displayed on the outward journey.

BRIGHTON PRIDE

The Pride Festival took place for the first time since 2019 on the weekend of 6 & 7 August. At least 95,000 people travelled to Brighton by train on the Saturday. Trains were strengthened, with stock being obtained by not running services from Brighton west of Chichester. First class accommodation was declassified and all types of ticket could be used on any train, including Gatwick Express. Preston Park and London Road stations were closed, to avoid overcrowding, and a queuing system was in place for evening departures from Brighton.

There were short-notice extra trains on Saturday from Three Bridges to Brighton at 12:20 and 13:45. Additional trains ran from Brighton on Saturday evening and overnight thus:

- Victoria: 23:50, 00:25, 00:50, 01:20, 01:55, 02:55, 03:20, 03:55
- Three Bridges: 01:10
- Bedford: 23:37
- Eastbourne: 00:02, 00:32, 01:00
- West Worthing: 17:08, 18:05, 18:34, 00:36, 01:06

There was also a Belmond British Pullman trip from Victoria to Brighton on 6 August, though it was advertised as a “murder mystery lunch”. Passengers had the afternoon in Brighton, while the train stabled at Newhaven Marine.

There were no additional services on Sunday, but trains remained very busy. Preston Park station was again closed; ticket inter-availability and the queuing system at Brighton station remained in place.

STRIKES

Southeastern ran no trains on 13 August, because its drivers were on strike. Thameslink operated to Sevenoaks and Rainham as usual, but the Southern service to Tonbridge was cancelled.

There were further strikes by **Network Rail** staff on 18 and 20 August, when the service was similar to that on earlier strike days. There was no Island Line service in the evening on 20 August, because Eastleigh Electric Control Room was not staffed.

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. Performance is measured against the timetable that each train operator advertised the previous day. Therefore, although very few trains run on strike days there is still a “good performance”, because only a limited timetable was intended.

	26 June to 23 July	MAA to 23 July
All TOCs	68.3%	71.4%
SWR	68.1% (10 th)	72.5% (9 th)
GTR	70.2% (8 th)	73.3% (8 th)
SE	67.1% (11 th)	70.3% (10 th)

Wednesday 27 June: A lineside fire at Star Lane and consequent cable damage caused the Quarry Line to be closed throughout the afternoon. With only a strike service operating, diversion of trains via Redhill was not a problem.

Thursday 28 July: A points failure at Selhurst delayed trains leaving the depot. The 14:22 Waterloo to Weybridge hit a tree on the line between Egham and Virginia Water. Both lines were blocked until 18:30. Most trains were cancelled or curtailed, but the 16:54 and 17:54 Waterloo to Farnham were diverted via Woking, gaining about half an hour on schedule.

Friday 29 July: The 08:31 Epsom to Victoria suffered a brake fault at Ewell East and terminated there. A signalling failure at Birchington-on-Sea disrupted late evening services. The 20:25 Victoria to Ramsgate and 21:25 St Pancras to Ramsgate were diverted via Dover and other trains were delayed or cancelled.

Saturday 30 July: There were no trains from Uckfield between 07:33 and 10:33, because of a points failure.

Monday 1 August: A signal failure at Norwood Fork Junction prevented trains running from West Croydon during the morning peak. Services were cancelled or diverted to Crystal Palace. The 16:05 from Waterloo, failed at Wool and could not easily be moved. Hardly any trains ran west of Wareham for the rest of the day. The 16:45 from Portsmouth Harbour was involved in a fatality at Surbiton. Some main line trains were diverted via Chertsey and Guildford New Line services that were not cancelled ran via Epsom.

Tuesday 2 August: A points failure at Mountfield resulted in the 05:10 gypsum train from Tonbridge blocking the main line for 1½ hours. There were significant delays to passenger services and many cancellations.

Wednesday 3 August: The 08:01 West Croydon to Highbury & Islington terminated at New Cross Gate, because of a problem with the brakes. The 17:02 London Bridge to Portsmouth & Southsea became immobilised after hitting a shopping trolley between Chichester and Fishbourne. It returned to Chichester following attention by fitters but the line did not re-open until after 22:00.

Thursday 4 August: A track circuit failure on the up slow line at Walton-on-Thames during the afternoon caused stopping trains from Basingstoke to be diverted to the up fast, omitting stops at Walton and Weybridge. There were no trains between Ashford and Dover for most of the afternoon, because of a points failure at Saltwood Junction. Services were cut back to Ashford or diverted via Canterbury West.

Sunday 7 August: An electrical fault caused several fires on the track at Portsmouth, resulting in the line being closed from 15:00. Trains terminated at Fareham, Havant or Chichester, or were cancelled entirely. A few trains were able to run to and from Fratton from 15:40 and Portsmouth Harbour from 17:00. There were no trains to Caterham from 18:00 until 23:30, because no signaller was available to operate the level crossings at Whyteleafe and Whyteleafe South.

Monday 8 August: Morning peak trains on the Lymington branch, because of a fault with Lymington Town level crossing. The 14:35 Waterloo to Weymouth suffered a brake fault and came to a stand at Redbridge. In order to clear the line, the two units, 444023 and 444024, had to be uncoupled and returned to Southampton Central separately about 18:20.

Tuesday 9 August: There were no trains between Weymouth and Dorchester for about two hours during the middle of the day, because of a track circuit failure.

Wednesday 10 August: A track circuit failures resulted in the Quarry Line being closed during the morning. Gatwick Express services were cancelled, as were trains between Victoria and Reigate, in order to free up capacity via Redhill. The up line was closed for about two hours from 08:30 between Haslemere and Witley because of a track defect. Trains were delayed or cancelled, but not diverted. Heat-related speed restrictions between Portsmouth and Southampton resulted in Southern services being diverted during the afternoon and early evening. Brighton trains terminated and started at Fratton and Victoria ones at Bognor. Later in the afternoon a signalling fault at Windmill Bridge Junction put platforms 1 and 2 at East Croydon out of use.

Thursday 11 August: The 10:42 Brighton to Cambridge terminated at Three Bridges, because of a problem with the brakes. The Mountfield to Southampton gypsum empties, hauled by 69005, failed between Lewisham and Nunhead about 13:50. The train was assisted forward by 66716 about 16:00. Meantime, trains between Victoria and Dartford were diverted to Cannon Street.

Friday 12 August: A series of problems disrupted Southern and Thameslink services throughout the day, including signalling failures at Streatham, South Croydon and Merstham, together with track faults and speed restrictions at Horley and Balcombe. A points failure put platforms 3 and 4 out of use at Bognor Regis from the middle of the afternoon, causing late running and cancellations. The Netley line was closed for most of the evening, because of a lineside fire between Woolston and Bitterne. Trains were cancelled or diverted via Botley. The 21:20 Waterloo to Salisbury was involved in a fatality near Berrylands.

Saturday 13 August: Panels fell out of the canopy over platform 3 at Salisbury during the afternoon. Following this only platforms 4 and 6 were available for the rest of the day, resulting in many cancellations and significant delays to trains. A points failure resulted in there being no trains from Guildford towards Havant or Redhill for about two hours from 16:30. Many evening trains between West Croydon and Sutton were cancelled or diverted to allow urgent track repairs. Evening trains between Wivelsfield and Lewes were cancelled or diverted via Brighton, because of a points failure. The 19:30 Waterloo to Weybridge terminated at Twickenham, because of a brake fault.

Sunday 14 August: The 08:20 from Sheerness was cancelled because of a problem with the train and the branch service was suspended until after 11:00. There were further cancellations in the afternoon, because of lack of crew.

Tuesday 16 August: The 04.58 Reading to Redhill terminated at Ash, because a tree had fallen onto the line. The railway was closed until after 09:00. The 07:45 Charing Cross to Hastings ran into sheep on the line near Robertsbridge, resulting in the line being closed until about 10:00. A power failure in the Hither Green area caused the 11:41 Orpington to Cannon Street to become stranded, causing serious disruption throughout the afternoon. Many Sidcup line trains were diverted via Bexleyheath.

Wednesday 17 August: A points failure at Metropolitan Junction prevented use of platforms 6 and 7 at London Bridge until after 08:30, resulting in congestion and delays. Trains from Charing Cross had to use the Down Snow Hill line, which is normally dedicated to Thameslink. Some trains were cancelled or diverted to Cannon Street or Victoria. The service was still disrupted when a fire broke out in an arch at Union Street, between London Bridge and Waterloo East, causing the line to be closed for about three hours from 09:30. The line between Lewes and Hampden Park was closed during the afternoon, after heavy rain washed away ballast. Victoria station was partly flooded. The 22:10 Charing Cross to Ashford became stranded after hitting a tree on the line near Pluckley. Reversible signalling allowed trains to run in both directions on the up line until the tree could be removed from under the train.

Friday 19 August: Services, particularly Southern ones, were curtailed or cancelled from mid-morning, after a points failure put platform 1 out of use at Portsmouth Harbour. Just as services were recovering early in the afternoon, goats invaded the track at Emsworth.

Sunday 21 August: Trains were cancelled or diverted until mid-morning, because of a tree on the line at Rowlands Castle.

Monday 22 August: A power failure affecting the signalling prevented trains running between Faversham and Ramsgate from just after 04:00 until 06:08. Trains were unable to leave Ramsgate depot, resulting in widespread disruption. Delays and cancellations continued into the afternoon, as crews and rolling stock were out of place. A signalling failure at Selhurst disrupted morning peak services, with trains delayed, cancelled or diverted via Crystal Palace or to London Bridge. A signalling fault between Lewisham and Blackheath caused delays during the afternoon, with some trains diverted via Sidcup. The 17:42 Charing Cross to Dartford terminated at Belvedere, because of a brake fault, blocking the line for about an hour. A Hoo Junction to Hither Green engineer's train failed at Dartford about 19:00. Adding to the chaos, a scooter was thrown onto the line at Grove Park.

Tuesday 23 August: The line was closed for 2½ hours after the 12:03 from Weymouth was involved in a fatality at Pokesdown.

AROUND THE REGION

Level crossings: This autumn the level crossing at Chartham is being converted from hand operation to lifting barriers controlled from Canterbury Wye Area Control Centre and supervised by CCTV. Network Rail intends to convert Wye level crossing in the same way.

Penge Tunnel did not re-open for the start of traffic on 1 August, following the nine days' closure for renewal of the track. There was no problem with the track, but a damaged signal cable was discovered in the middle of the tunnel during the night. Passenger trains resumed between Brixton and Beckenham Junction just after midday, starting with

the 11:58 Victoria to Orpington and the 10:18 from Dover Priory. Work in the tunnel continued for a week, but only overnight. The internal dimensions of the tunnel required the new sleepers to be shorter than standard.

London Bridge: Quite a few stations have pianos that can be played by the public, but London Bridge now has an organ!

East Grinstead: A new footbridge has replaced the old one, but the lifts are not working yet.

Gatwick Airport: In connection with the station rebuilding work, platform 5 was taken out of use from 24 August. It is planned that it will come back into use in December 2022. Meantime, trains can pass through without stopping.

Littlehaven: Parsonage Road level crossing was closed to road traffic from 20 to 28 August while it was converted from half barriers to full barriers with CCTV supervision from Three Bridges ASC.

Barnes Bridge: There are plans, supported by Network Rail, to convert the disused Barnes railway bridge into a footbridge. The bridge has three cast iron arches and was replaced by the present bridge, immediately downstream in 1895. By then it was appreciated that cast iron is unsuitable for use in bridge spans, unless the loading is modest, because it tends to fracture when under tension.

Wimbledon: New direction signs have been installed at Wimbledon station, with yellow signs indicating fully accessible routes to and from platforms and green signs giving directions to cycle storage. The London Trams roundel has been added to the street frontage. There are similar direction signs at Richmond and Woking.

Wimbledon Chase: A developer has applied for planning permission to demolish the street level building at Wimbledon Chase station, in order to build a block of flats. The station would be left with an inconspicuous entrance and it is not intended to provide step-free access to the platforms. The Wimbledon Society and others have objected to the application.

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