

## REGIONAL REVIEW: OCTOBER 2023

### STOCK NOTES

**Class 376:** Following completion of the class 375 refurbishment in March 2024, Southeastern plans to refurbish the class 376 units. However, this will not include provision of air-conditioning, on cost grounds.

**Class 458:** Test runs with class 458/4 units started on 9 Oct, when 458407+417 ran 11:19 Bournemouth Depot to Basingstoke and 13:20 return. Unit 458425 was delivered to Bournemouth on 11 October and 458516 departed for Widnes next day.

**Classes 465 and 466:** Further units moved to store at Worksop are 465921+466005 on 28 September and 465934+466030 on 12 October.

**Class 701:** Further stock moves have included:

27 September	701009 Eastleigh to Bicester MoD
28 September	701055 Eastleigh to Bicester MoD
3 October	701020 Eastleigh to Bicester MoD
4 October	701515 Derby to Eastleigh
11 October	701516 Derby to Eastleigh
12 October	701056 Eastleigh to Bicester MoD
13 October	701517 Derby to Eastleigh
18 October	701519 Derby to Eastleigh
19 October	701057 Eastleigh to Marchwood
23 October	701518 Derby to Eastleigh

**Class 707:** 707015+016 ran from Waterloo to Grove Park on 30 September. The last SWR class 707 working was 707030+024 on the 20:30 Kingston Loop service on Friday 13 October. 707017+022 ran from Waterloo to Grove Park in the early hours of 14 October, with 707024+030 expected to follow two weeks later.

### TIMETABLES and DIAGRAMS

**Gatwick from Kent:** Consideration is being given to reinstating through trains between Tonbridge and Gatwick Airport.

**West of England:** The West of England timetable is improved from December, with more local trains between Salisbury and Basingstoke running through to and from Waterloo. There are also to be a few additional trains between Waterloo and stations west of Salisbury.

### INTERESTING WORKINGS

**Inspections:** West Coast Railways operated a special train comprising saloon 999506 topped and tailed by 33029 and 33207 on 29 September. The route was Maidenhead, Acton Wells Junction, Euston, Acton Yard, Kensington, Waterloo, North Pole Depot, Kensington, Acton Wells, Hayes & Harlington. The access to North Pole Depot from the West London Line is hardly ever used these days. The trip was in connection with proposals to divert GWR trains to Waterloo and/or Euston while the HS2 station at Old Oak Common is under construction. Inspection Saloon 975025, the former Hastings DEMU buffet car ran empty from Derby to Bournemouth via Oxford, propelled by 37418, on 16 October. Next day it was used for a tour of inspection to Weymouth and then Southampton Central, Portsmouth Harbour, Guildford, Tilehurst (reverse), Basingstoke and Waterloo. It then ran empty from Waterloo to Ferme Park via Kensington Olympia, and from there back home to Derby on 18 October.

**Class 317:** On 18 October unit 317506 was hauled from Ely, where it had been stored, to Eastleigh Works for scrapping. It was routed via Kew East and Chertsey, hauled by 37884. Others are likely to follow.

**Class 377:** Unit 377708 ran from Selhurst Depot to Tonbridge during the morning on 13 Oct, returning with 377321. This is thought to be the first instance of a 377/7 reaching Tonbridge.

**Class 458:** The morning trains from Farnham to Waterloo via Camberley were diverted via Woking and the main line on 11 October, because of damage to Pooley Green level crossing (see Incidents on 10 October). The 06:19 from Farnham was formed of units 458518+529 and the 06:49 was 458506+503. Class 458 units are not normally seen in passenger service on the main line west of Hampton Court Junction.

**Excursions:** The Locomotive Services Blue Pullman HST, with power cars 43046 and 43047, worked an Eastleigh to Carlisle via Oxford excursion on 14 October. 47593 and 47810 topped and tailed a Woking to Kingswear trip via Havant, Eastleigh and Westbury on 18 October.

## **LOCOMOTIVE-WORKED RAILHEAD TREATMENT TRAINS**

Most Southern Region railhead treatment trains use multi-purpose vehicles, but those from Tonbridge operated by GBRf use locomotives, usually class 73 top and tail. Schedules identified as GBRf-operated railhead treatment trains are as follows, but workings may vary, particularly at weekends when lines may be closed for engineering work. Workings from Tonbridge Engineering Sidings are operated by Balfour Beatty, so are multi-purpose vehicles.

**3W90 Monday to Friday:** 04:30 Tonbridge West Yard, 04:59-05:10 Redhill, 05:49-06:17 Brighton, 06:34-06:39 Haywards Heath, 06:59-07:04 Lewes, 07:17-07:40 Newhaven Marine, 08:16-08:18 Three Bridges, 08:40-08:51 Redhill, 09:03-09:12 Purley, Selhurst, 09:41-09:55 Clapham Junction, Kensington Olympia, 10:17-10:22 Willesden South West Sidings, Kensington Olympia, Mitcham Junction, 11:02-11:05 Sutton, Wimbledon, 11:26-11:33 Tulse Hill, Wimbledon, Sutton, Mitcham Junction, 12:12-12:16 Tulse Hill, Selhurst, 13:12-14:47 East Grinstead, 15:06-15:11 Hurst Green, 15:48-16:03 Uckfield, 17:10-17:15 Norwood Junction, 17:22-17:24 West Croydon, Sutton, 18:30 Horsham, 18:52-18:54 Gatwick Airport, 19:02-19:10 Redhill, 19:36 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W74 Monday to Friday:** 05:36 Tonbridge West Yard, 06:13-06:18 Ashford International, Canterbury West, 07:50-08:00 Faversham, 08:18-08:24 Sittingbourne, 09:16-10:05 Dover Priory Sidings, 10:38-10:43 Faversham, 11:54-12:04 Dover Priory, 12:40-12:47 Ramsgate, Canterbury West, 13:48-13:59 Headcorn, 14:25 Tonbridge West Yard

**3Y74 Monday to Friday:** 10:15 Tonbridge West Yard, 10:44-10:52 Redhill, 11:21-11:29 Tonbridge, 12:33-13:31 Hastings Park Sidings, 14:34-14:44 Tonbridge, 16:01-16:07 Dover Priory, 17:29 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W75 Monday to Friday:** 15:26 Tonbridge West Yard, Maidstone West, 16:08-16:12 Strood, 16:17-16:36 Rochester, 16:59-17:03 Sittingbourne, 18:04-18:09 Kent House, 18:30-19:18 London Victoria (platform 1), 19:35-19:41 Kent House, Otford, 20:11-20:15 Sevenoaks, Otford, Catford, 21:04-21:09 Cambria Junction (reverse), Catford, 22:06-22:15 Rochester, 22:22-22:27 Strood, Maidstone West, 23:03-23:05 Paddock Wood, 23:17 Tonbridge West Yard

**3Y75 Monday to Friday:** 22:10 Tonbridge West Yard, Canterbury West, 23:44-23:50 Ramsgate, 00:25-00:33 Dover Priory Sidings, 01:13-02:06 Faversham, 02:46-02:51 Dover Priory, 03:25-03:30 Ramsgate, Canterbury West, 05:02 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W90 Saturday:** 04:32 Tonbridge West Yard, 04:55-05:00 Redhill, 05:57-06:01 Seaford, 06:35-06:46 Haywards Heath, 07:02-07:05 Brighton, 07:43-07:45 Gatwick Airport, Redhill, Selhurst, 08:22-08:33 London Victoria (platform 19), Selhurst, 09:32-10:44 East Grinstead, 11:03-11:08 Hurst Green, 11:47-12:02 Uckfield, 13:07-13:09 South Croydon, 13:21-13:27 Norwood Junction, Epsom, 14:28-14:33 Horsham, 14:51-14:55 Gatwick Airport, 15:03-15:09 Redhill, 15:35 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W74 Saturday:** 06:00 Tonbridge West Yard, Canterbury West, 07:52-07:57 Sittingbourne, 08:47-09:33 Dover Priory Sidings, 10:10-10:15 Faversham, Ramsgate, 11:23-11:28 Dover Priory, 12:12-12:19 Margate, Canterbury West, 13:52 Tonbridge West Yard

**3Y74 Saturday:** 10:32 Tonbridge West Yard, 11:06-11:29 Redhill, 11:59-12:06 Tonbridge, 13:08-14:08 Hastings Park Sidings, 15:09-15:25 Tonbridge, 16:38-17:04 Dover Priory, 18:24 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W75 Saturday:** 15:15 Tonbridge West Yard, Maidstone West, 16:02-16:11 Strood, 16:40-16:47 Faversham, Kent House, 18:11-19:21 London Victoria (platform 8), Kent House, 19:54-19:59 Swanley, Catford, 20:31-20:36 Cambria Junction (reverse), Catford, 21:29-21:45 Rochester, 21:49-21:55 Strood, Maidstone West, 22:37 Tonbridge West Yard

**3Y75 Saturday** (mostly in early hours of Sunday): 23:32 Tonbridge West Yard, Canterbury West, 01:05-01:10 Ramsgate, 01:44-01:49 Dover Priory Sidings, 02:29-03:16 Faversham, 03:56-04:01 Dover Priory, 04:35-04:40 Ramsgate, Canterbury West, 06:12 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W74 Sunday:** 06:11 Tonbridge West Yard, Canterbury West, 07:58-08:11 Faversham, 08:20-08:25 Sittingbourne, 09:02-10:08 Dover Priory Sidings, 10:41-10:46 Faversham, Ramsgate, 11:57-12:02 Dover Priory, 12:39-12:51 Ramsgate, Canterbury West, 14:13 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W90 Sunday:** 07:15 Tonbridge West Yard, 07:39-07:44 Redhill, 08:05-08:21 Haywards Heath, 08:38-09:42 Brighton, 10:00-10:08 Haywards Heath, 10:39-10:55 Newhaven Marine, 11:30-12:00 Haywards Heath, Redhill, 12:39-12:52 Purley, 12:57-13:02 South Croydon, 13:53-13:58 Uckfield, 14:42-14:47 Hurst Green, 15:07-15:55 East Grinstead, Selhurst, 17:03-17:40 London Victoria (platform 19), Selhurst, 18:00-18:08 South Croydon, 18:24-18:32 New Cross Gate Up Sussex Loop (reverse), West Croydon, Epsom, 19:47-19:52 Horsham, 20:28-20:33 Redhill, 20:56 Tonbridge West Yard

**3Y74 Sunday:** 09:18 Tonbridge West Yard, 09:52-09:58 Redhill, 10:28-10:38 Tonbridge, 11:47-12:58 Hastings Park Sidings, 14:03-14:08 Tonbridge, 14:30-14:40 Cranmore Down Loop, 14:43-14:52 Headcorn, 15:10-15:22 Ashford International, 15:54-16:30 Dover Priory, 17:52 Tonbridge West Yard

**3W75 Sunday:** 14:45 Tonbridge West Yard, Maidstone West, 15:37-15:42 Strood, 16:02-16:13 Sittingbourne, Kent House, 17:43-18:43 London Victoria (platform 1), Kent House, 19:09-19:14 Swanley, Catford, 19:35-19:40 Cambria Junction (reverse), Catford, 20:27-20:47 Rochester, 20:51-20:56 Strood, Maidstone West, 21:32 Tonbridge West Yard

**3Y90 Sunday:** 16:07 Tonbridge West Yard, 16:36-16:41 Redhill, 17:09-17:13 Horsham, Epsom, 18:11-18:12 West Croydon, 18:16-18:22 Norwood Junction, 18:46-18:51 Caterham, 19:02-19:07 Purley, 19:28-19:33 Tattenham Corner, 19:58-20:03 South Croydon, 20:39-21:24 East Grinstead, 22:16-22:29 New Cross Gate Up Sussex Loop, 22:37-23:05 London Bridge (platform 10), 23:27-23:28 Norwood Junction, Selhurst. 23:49-23:54 Tulse Hill, Selhurst, 00:23-00:28 Norwood Junction, 00:36-00:41 South Croydon, 01:04-01:09 London Bridge (platform 12), Norwood Junction, Epsom, 02:24-03:09 Horsham Up TC, 03:14-03:19 Horsham, 03:48-03:53 Redhill, 04:23 Tonbridge West Yard

**3Y75 Sunday** (mostly in the early hours of Monday): 23:26 Tonbridge West Yard, Canterbury West, 00:57-01:02 Ramsgate, 01:36-01:41 Dover Priory Sidings, 02:21-03:21 Faversham, 04:01-04:06 Dover Priory, 04:42-05:03 Ramsgate, Canterbury West, 06:07-06:19 Headcorn, 06:49 Tonbridge West Yard

## **RAIL BUSINESS**

**Arriva Sale:** Deutsche Bahn, the German state railway, has agreed to sell its transport subsidiary Arriva. The purchaser is I Squared Capital, an infrastructure and utilities company based in the United States, but registered in the Cayman Islands. Arriva has contracts to operate several UK train companies, including London Overground and CrossCountry. The sale is subject to approval by the German government. Arriva has been owned by Deutsche Bahn since 2010.

## INDUSTRIAL ACTION

ASLEF called further strikes for 30 September and 4 October, when there was a similar service to that on 1 September. There was an ASLEF overtime ban on 29 September and from 2 to 6 October. RMT members have voted to approve strike action over a further six months at the train companies controlled by the Department for Transport. This includes Southeastern, Govia Thameslink Railway, South Western Railway, Great Western and CrossCountry, but not London Overground.

## 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.

	20 August to 16 Sept	MAA to 16 Sept
All TOCs	69.0%	67.8%
SWR	69.9% (10 <sup>th</sup> )	68.0% (11 <sup>th</sup> )
GTR	69.8% (11 <sup>th</sup> )	68.6% (10 <sup>th</sup> )
SE	69.1% (12 <sup>th</sup> )	66.1% (12 <sup>th</sup> )

**Collision at Salisbury:** The Rail Accident Investigation Branch's full report into the collision between two trains at Salisbury Tunnel Junction on 31 October 2021 was published on 24 October. A previous report described the events leading up to the collision and the immediate causes. The latest report focusses much more on underlying factors. Wet weather and high winds during the peak leaf-fall period had resulted in very poor adhesion, so the 17:20 Waterloo to Honiton failed to stop at the signal protecting Salisbury Tunnel Junction. As a result of that it collided with the 17:08 Portsmouth Harbour to Bristol Temple Meads. Fourteen people required hospital treatment and both trains were severely damaged. RAIB considers that the driver of the Honiton train did not apply the brakes soon enough and found that the train's braking systems were unable to mitigate the very poor adhesion.

RAIB also found that Network Rail's Wessex Route did not adequately manage vegetation in the Salisbury area, nor was contamination of the rail head effectively managed, either by proactive or reactive means. South Western Railway did not effectively prepare its drivers for assessing and reporting low adhesion conditions. Network Rail has reviewed staff training and adhesion management standards. SWR has improved training and briefing of drivers in relation to working during the leaf fall season.

RAIB noted the poor survival space in the train's cab. If the driver had not moved clear he could have been seriously or fatally injured. It is also noted that some of the internal sliding doors within the train jammed as a result of the collision, making it harder for passengers to leave the train.

**Tuesday 26 September:** The line was blocked for about three hours after the 10:03 from Weymouth was involved in a fatality between Dorchester South and Moreton.

**Wednesday 27 September:** A rail head treatment train derailed in Tonbridge West Yard during the night, because of the condition of the track. The 05:11 Littlehampton to Victoria was diverted via Crawley, because of a points failure at West Worthing. A burst water main flooded the line at Kemsley, so there were no trains to or from Sheerness from 06:00 until 15:00. Passengers on a Belmond British Pullman trip to Chesterfield, for Chatsworth, had almost two hours to view the scenic delights of Battersea, because of a points failure at Stewarts Lane.

**Thursday 28 September:** Morning peak trains were delayed by a points failure at Preston Park and a signalling fault between Wivelsfield and Haywards Heath. Gatwick Express services were cut back to Haywards Heath or cancelled entirely. A points failure at Woking required all trains towards Brookwood to use the down slow line for about nine hours from midday, causing some delays.

**Friday 29 September:** A traction power problem between Charing Cross and Waterloo East caused delays and cancellations for most of the morning, with some trains diverted to Cannon Street. During the peak period only platforms 4, 5 and 6 could be used at Charing Cross. A points failure at Willingdon Junction about 08:30 caused delays and cancellations for the rest of the morning. The line was closed for about two hours after the 15:42 Victoria to Gillingham hit a person at Catford. Trains were diverted via Herne Hill.

**Monday 2 October:** The line was closed for two hours after the 10:20 St Pancras to Ramsgate was involved in a fatality at Chestfield & Swalecliffe. Loss of power to the signalling on the Sidcup line during the afternoon resulted in trains being diverted via Bexleyheath.

**Tuesday 3 October:** A signalling failure at Charing Cross caused some early afternoon trains to be diverted to Cannon Street. Locomotive 66790 failed at Eastleigh on departure with the 14:50 infrastructure train to Westbury. There was significant disruption until another locomotive hauled the train back into the yard about 16:30, with some diversions via Havant (SWR) or Laverstock (CrossCountry). A signalling failure at Crystal Palace about 21:00 caused London Overground services to be cancelled and trains between London Bridge and Victoria to be diverted via Tulse Hill.

**Thursday 5 October:** A points failure at Frimley shortly after 08:00 resulted in the service between Ascot and Aldershot being suspended for three hours. A track circuit failure meant that the 10:23 to Alton and following trains terminated at Farnham. The service resumed with the 12:23. The branch service was suspended for two hours early in the afternoon after a person accidentally drove their mobility scooter off the platform edge at Sheerness.

**Friday 6 October:** Morning peak services between Leatherhead and Dorking were cancelled because of a track defect. The 08:12 from Waterloo, units 458504+535, failed at Sunbury and terminated there.

**Saturday 7 October:** Trains from Gravesend to Cannon Street via Woolwich and Lewisham were diverted via Greenwich for four hours from 09:20, because of signalling failure between Charlton and Lewisham. The 19:04 Farnham to Guildford terminated at Ash after the guard was assaulted by a passenger.

**Sunday 8 October:** Most morning services to and from Sheerness were cancelled, because of a fault with Kings Ferry Bridge. A points failure at Horsham about 18:30 resulted in Thameslink services being cut back to Three Bridges.

**Monday 9 October:** The 08:13 from Maidstone East collided with the buffer stops at Charing Cross, fortunately without causing any injuries or serious damage. Locomotive 66511 failed between Hook and Basingstoke about 16:00 while hauling a Woking to Merehead empty freight train. The down slow line was blocked until an assisting locomotive was able to take the train forward about 20:45.

**Tuesday 10 October:** The line was closed at Portchester for most of the morning after a man was found dead on the track. Trains between London and Portsmouth via Winchester were diverted via Haslemere and others were curtailed or cancelled. The 10:55 Ashford to Victoria failed between Ashford and Charing. A track circuit failure at Lewisham Vale Junction prevented trains running between Lewisham and Nunhead for two hours during the afternoon. A moped rider attempted to cross Pooley Green level crossing, Egham, after the barriers had lowered and was fatally injured when struck by the 19:20 Waterloo to Reading. The line was closed for over three hours, but trains were subject to delay until mid-morning next day while the level crossing was repaired.

**Wednesday 11 October:** There were no trains to Chessington between the 13:47 and 16:17 from Waterloo, because of a points failure at Tolworth. Fifteen workers at Stewarts Lane depot became ill during the afternoon, requiring attendance by paramedics. The cause was not clear, but it is likely they were affected by a noxious substance.

**Thursday 12 October:** The 19:27 from Ashford hit an obstruction on the line near Borough Green. It was able to continue to Swanley, where it terminated 1½ hours late. The 20:29 from Ashford was diverted via Bat & Ball.

**Friday 13 October:** The 04:51 Ramsgate to St Pancras hit a tree between Minster and Sturry. The line was blocked for about three hours, with trains diverted via Dover. The 11:52 Ramsgate to Victoria failed at Herne Bay. Another unit assisted the train to Faversham, where it terminated 1½ hours late. The 12:52 from Ramsgate was diverted via Dover and Canterbury East, as was the 13:20 to St Pancras, but that terminated at Faversham.

**Saturday 14 October:** A points failure at Winchester closed the down line for about 1½ hours from 17:30. The 16:35 from Waterloo was delayed by over 1½ hours and terminated at Poole, by which time it had lost a further half hour. Engineering work prevented diversion via the Portsmouth Direct line, so following trains were cancelled or delayed.

**Sunday 15 October:** A power failure between Brighton and Lewes about 19:30 brought trains to a stop for an hour. Normal service resumed by 21:30.

**Monday 16 October:** Trains were delayed leaving Feltham Depot because of an axle counter failure, resulting in cancellations and delays to early morning services. The 12:54 Victoria to Ore failed on the down line between Hampden Park and Eastbourne, because of a fault on unit 377133. Following repairs the train was able to continue to Eastbourne,

where it terminated 161 minutes late. Unit 465011 derailed at Slade Green Depot during the evening. Trains between Barnham and Horsham were delayed, cancelled or diverted via Hove from 17:10, firstly because of a bridge strike at Amberley and then by a communications failure at Arundel signal box.

**Tuesday 17 October:** The line was closed for 1½ hours after a person was hit by a freight train at Ashford (Surrey) about 22:00. Victoria station was evacuated for a short time at 21:15, because of a minor fire at platform 14.

**Thursday 19 October:** A signalling failure on the up fast line between Wimbledon and Earlsfield during the morning peak resulted in some trains being diverted via East Putney, though most were delayed at signals or routed via the up slow. There was severe disruption throughout the day on the Brighton line, with extensive delays and numerous cancellations. There had been intermittent track circuit failures on the down line south of Balcombe Tunnel Junction from Tuesday evening, possibly caused by waterlogged ballast in Balcombe Tunnel. Matters were made worse by a separate signal failure on the up line during the morning. Several line closures were required as staff attempted repairs. A person on the track at West Croydon was fortunate to escape with minor injuries when hit by the 13:45 Epsom to London Bridge. The line was closed for about an hour, with London Overground services diverted to Crystal Palace. The 14:08 from Epsom Downs, 14:15 from Epsom and 14:25 London Bridge to Epsom were diverted via Mitcham Junction.

**Saturday 21 October:** Trains were unable to run between Cosham and Portchester until after 07:00, because of over-running engineering work.

**Monday 23 October:** The train service on the Lymington branch was reduced to hourly, because of a signalling problem. This was expected to continue until Thursday. A traction power failure at Crystal Palace about 09:45 disrupted Southern services. London Overground was unaffected, but trains between Victoria and West Croydon were diverted via Selhurst and those to and from Beckenham Junction were cancelled. Normal service resumed in the middle of the afternoon.

## AROUND THE REGION

**Tunbridge Wells:** Royal Tunbridge Wells Civic Society has made an award to Network Rail and the Railway Heritage Trust, commending the restoration of architectural ironwork at Mount Pleasant bridge, which spans the south end of Tunbridge Wells station.

**Victoria:** Network Rail is increasing the number of ticket gates at Victoria from 88 to 125, in order to relieve congestion at the station. Retail units by platforms 2 to 7 in the Chatham station and 8 to 13 on the Brighton side have been removed to create space for the new gate lines, which will be completed by March 2024. The passage to platforms 15 to 19 has been widened by removing retail units there.

**Three Bridges:** It seemed like a good idea at the time, but control of the Midland Main Line platforms at St Pancras is to transfer from Three Bridges ROC back to West Hampstead over the Christmas/New Year holiday period.

**Egham:** Residents have complained that the barriers are down for longer at Egham level crossing since the line was resignalled at the end of August. Network Rail has said "We recognise the level of concern locally, so we're working hard to understand whether there's anything more we can do to strike a balance between maintaining a safe and reliable railway service for passengers, while also keeping people moving on the local road network."

**Portsmouth Direct Line:** Resignalling work being undertaken during the line closure from 21 to 29 October includes erecting signal gantries at Haslemere and upgrading Farncombe East and Liss level crossings. Other work includes stabilising cutting slopes at Haslemere and Witley, brickwork repairs in Guildford Tunnel and vegetation management. It is planned that new signalling, controlled from Basingstoke ROC, will be commissioned in October 2024.

**CREDITS:** Colin Duff, John Goodrich, Stuart Hicks