

## REGIONAL REVIEW: JUNE 2024

### STOCK NOTES

**Class 73:** 73128 has been repainted in Network SouthEast livery and was named *Kent & East Sussex Railway* at Robertsbridge on 31 May. It recalls 73126 which was similarly painted and named in 1991, but scrapped in 2009. Caledonian 73970 has been named *W. S. Sellar*. The locomotive carries a plaque stating that Stuart was a career railwayman, photographer and founder member of the Scottish Railway Preservation Society.

**Class 444:** Unit 444040 was named *THE D-DAY STORY* at Portsmouth Harbour station on 4 June. The Lord Mayor of Portsmouth, representatives of the Royal Navy and of the D-Day Story Museum in Portsmouth were among those present for the event, which took place between the unit's arrival from Waterloo at 09:36 and its return at 10:15.

**Class 458:** Further moves to and from Widnes Alstom have been:

29 May: 458427 to Poole Sidings, where the train terminated because of a brake fault.  
30 May: 458427 Poole Sidings to Bournemouth Depot  
6 June: 458526 from Bournemouth (onwards from Eastleigh on 9 June)  
11 June: 458412 to Bournemouth, 458508 from Bournemouth

A visit to Eastleigh Works on 15 June found 458416/24/25 stored there. 458423/28 were away, but returned to the works from Bournemouth Depot on 17 June.

**Class 701:** Further moves, in addition to test trips, have included:

21 May: 701005 Eastleigh to Long Marston  
22 May: 701002 Eastleigh to Long Marston  
29 May: 701012 Derby to Eastleigh  
3 June: 701058 Eastleigh to Long Marston  
4 June: 701032 Wimbledon Park to Marchwood, 701045 Marchwood to Wimbledon Park  
5 June: 701060 Derby to Wimbledon Park  
12 June: 701038 Eastleigh to Marchwood

Units noted at Long Marston during a rail industry event on 19 June were:  
701002/03/05/13/18/23/25/26/30/33/34/41/48/50-52/58 and 701517-19/24.

**Eurostar:** The remaining eight original Eurostar class 373 trains will be withdrawn when Eurostar takes delivery of a new fleet of up to fifty high-speed trains. Eurostar now incorporates the former Thalys high speed services from Paris to Belgium, the Netherlands and Northwest Germany and the new trains will also replace that fleet as well as allowing for growth. The planned new trains will be able to operate on all Eurostar routes, including to London. It is planned to let a contract for the new trains by the end of this year.

### TIMETABLES and DIAGRAMS

**Class 455:** Since 3 June the 16:22 Waterloo to Weybridge and the 18:10 return have been worked by a single class 455 unit, Mondays to Fridays. Class 455 is not equipped for selective door opening and platform 3 at Virginia Water can only accommodate seven coaches, so 2x455 cannot work in passenger service from Weybridge via Chertsey.

**Class 458:** The first use of class 458/4 units in passenger service was on 24 June when 458421+422 worked 06:22 & 15:22 Waterloo to Weybridge, 08:02 & 17:03 return and 18:37 Waterloo to Twickenham via Hounslow. Having stabled overnight at Feltham Depot the units worked 05:31 Hounslow to Waterloo via Kew Bridge, then 06:22 to Weybridge, 08:02 return and empty to Wimbledon Park. 458415+421 emerged from the depot to work the same afternoon and evening workings as the previous day.

**Southern to Southampton:** Although there have been many class 387 workings to Southampton since 2 June, there remain a significant number of trains that are formed of class 377 units.

**Isle of Wight:** Two trains were in service from 2 June, but running approximately every forty minutes. Connections st Ryde Pier Head with the hourly ferry to Portsmouth are rather hit and miss. Running times do not permit a half-hourly service, with two trains passing at Brading. Were those who planned and authorised expenditure on Brading loop expecting the class 484 trains to be a whole lot faster than they actually are? To run trains half-hourly would require three units, passing at Sandown and between Smallbrook Junction and St John's Road.

**Freight:** There is now regular aviation fuel traffic from Grain to Prestwick. It is staged via Doncaster and Carlisle, so there are no through schedules northbound. Gypsum traffic from Southampton Docks to Mountfield was suspended from 2 May, while the terminal at Mountfield was refurbished, and resumed on 4 June.

**Kent to Gatwick:** Network Rail has published a report looking at the practicability of through trains between Tonbridge and Gatwick Airport. It is estimated that this could reduce journey times between many stations in Kent and the airport by twenty minutes. However, scheduling additional trains between Redhill and Gatwick could be difficult.

## INTERESTING WORKINGS

**Class 73:** Caledonian 73967 ran from Doncaster to Eastleigh Works on 22 May and returned on 19 June.

**Class 201:** On 8 June unit 1001 worked an excursion from Hastings to Skegness, outward via Herne Hill, Kensington, Harringay Curve, the new diveunder at Werrington Junction and Sleaford (reverse). The return was as outward, except for running via the old route at Werrington Junction, Finsbury Park and Camden Road.

**Class 377:** Units 377608+623 were reported to be working Gatwick Express services on 10 June.

**Class 438 (4TC):** London Underground's 4TC unit was used for a trip from Eastleigh to King's Lynn and back on 25 May, topped and tailed by 50008 and 20007. Next day the 4TC was used for an excursion from Eastleigh to Weymouth via Yeovil topped and tailed by 50008 and 66509. It was scheduled to return via Bournemouth, but had to be diverted via Westbury because of a fatality at Holton Heath. The unit was worked by 50008 and 33012 on a one-way excursion from Eastleigh to Sheringham, for the North Norfolk Railway, on 6 June. The train returned empty Sheringham to Tyseley on 9 June and to Eastleigh, with just 33012, next day.

**Class 455:** Blue and grey unit 455868 was again working Reading services on 21 June, with 455709.

**Classes 465 & 466:** Engineering work between Margate and Ramsgate on 9 June resulted in Networkers operating between Victoria and Margate. These included 465176+465195 on the 07:42 from Margate, 465197+465155+466025 on the 08:05 and 465157+465906 on the 10:05.

**Excursions:** A trip from Norwich to Weymouth on 15 June was topped and tailed by 47593 and 47712. Unfortunately this included a Mark 3 carriage with long swing-link bogies, which are not permitted on Southern Region lines with conductor rails. When this was realised the train was detained at Poole for the vehicle to be detached and shunted into the sidings there. Fortunately, the carriage was coupled to 47593, so the shunting was less disruptive than it might have been, but the train was three hours late at Weymouth. 47810 and 47828 worked a trip from Woking to Kingswear via Havant, Eastleigh and Westbury on 22 June.

**Royal Ascot:** The customary additional trains ran between Waterloo and Ascot in connection with the Royal Ascot race meeting between 18 and 22 June. At busy times there were four trains an hour, with most running to and from Reading. Except on Saturday 22<sup>nd</sup>, when all trains were to and from Reading, one train each hour turned back at Bracknell. There was an excursion from Manchester Victoria to Ascot via Kew East on 20 June topped and tailed by 57313 and 57601.

## 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.

P2	29 April to 26 May 2024	MAA to 26 May 2024
All TOCs	70.3%	67.4%
SWR	71.1% (10 <sup>th</sup> )	66.9% (12 <sup>th</sup> )
GTR	70.7% (11 <sup>th</sup> )	68.3% (10 <sup>th</sup> )
SE	71.4% (9 <sup>th</sup> )	67.4% (11 <sup>th</sup> )

**Tuesday 21 May:** A burst water main caused a landslip between Bearsted and Maidstone East, resulting in the up line being blocked for four hours from 07:00. Trains were diverted via Tonbridge or cancelled.

**Wednesday 22 May** A tree fell onto the line at Stoneleigh about 08:00, resulting in down trains being cancelled or diverted via Cobham until after 10:30. The line between Woking and Guildford was closed for two hours from 20:00 after a trespasser was electrocuted.

**Thursday 23 May:** The 09:44 from Ryde Pier Head, unit 484004, failed at Brading, resulting in all services being cancelled for four hours. The 13:01 Tonbridge to Redhill hit a tree near Godstone, so there were no further trains until the 16:24 from Tonbridge. The 21:24 Victoria to Eastbourne was involved in a fatality at Purley Oaks and terminated at Purley 110 minutes late. Trains were able to continue running on the slow lines.

**Friday 24 May:** The 07:45 Clapham Junction to Dalston Junction failed between Clapham High Street and Denmark Hill, with the driver unable to release the brakes. Current had to be isolated while passengers were escorted along the track to Clapham High Street station. London Overground services were suspended for the rest of the morning and there were further cancellations during the afternoon, as a result of trains and staff being out of place.

**Saturday 25 May:** A signalling failure at Cosham caused delays during the afternoon, with some Southern services cut back to Barnham or Chichester.

**Sunday 26 May:** A track circuit failure at Brighton caused intermittent problems throughout the afternoon. No trains were able to run between Brighton to Preston Park from midday. The down line reopened after about half an hour, resulting in all available platforms at Brighton becoming occupied by trains that were unable to depart. The 12:02 from Victoria had to be diverted to platform 1 via Hove. The up line was back in use by 13:15, but platform 5 remained unavailable until late afternoon. The 11:40 Bournemouth to Manchester terminated at Basingstoke, because of a points failure, and the train returned to Bournemouth in the path of the 09:27 from Manchester, which terminated at Reading. The fault was rectified in time for the trains an hour later to run as planned. The line was closed for almost four hours after the 14:48 Weymouth to Waterloo was involved in a fatality at Holton Heath.

**Monday 27 May:** A points failure at Redhill disrupted services for about three hours from 17:40. Trains from Gatwick Airport had to run via the up main line, so were unable to call, or were diverted via the Quarry Line. Tonbridge trains were cancelled and Great Western services could not run to or from Gatwick.

**Wednesday 29 May:** 66750 failed near Eynsford about 17:45 with a Wembley to Dollands Moor freight. 66751 assisted the train forward 160 minutes late. Other trains were cancelled or diverted via Orpington meantime.

**Thursday 30 May:** An overnight possession of the slow lines between Hither Green and Petts Wood Junction over-ran by three hours and the lines did not reopen until after 08:00. With all trains having to use the fast lines, some were cancelled and a few main line services were diverted to and from Victoria. Trains could only depart from Grove Park Sidings via the Lee Spur. Just as the line opened, a signal failure at Lewisham added to the disruption. The phones at level crossings supervised from Arundel signal box ceased working shortly before 14:00, resulting in delays, because trains had to proceed at caution. This affected three level crossings between Angmering and Ford and seven on the line to Amberley. The phones were returned to use three hours later.

**Friday 31 May:** A signalling failure at Brockley caused disruption during the morning, with some Southern services diverted to Victoria and some Thameslink via Tulse Hill.

**Saturday 1 June:** The 16:08 Charing Cross to Hastings hit a large tree between Mountfield and Battle. After debris was cleared the train was able to continue an hour later to Battle, where it was taken out of service for repairs. A signalling fault on the Quarry Line resulted in trains being diverted via Redhill during the evening.

**Sunday 2 June:** An engineering work over-run between Clapham Junction and Wimbledon resulted in trains being diverted via East Putney until 07:45. There was a possession all day between Orpington and Tonbridge, with only the down side bay platforms at Orpington available for use. Unfortunately, a power failure put the bays and the carriage sidings out of use until after 10:00. Numerous trains were cancelled, because the rolling stock was stabled at Orpington. Others terminated short at Bromley South, Beckenham Junction or Grove Park. The service was disrupted for the rest of the morning, because stock and crews were displaced.

**Monday 3 June:** The 09:29 Portsmouth Harbour to Victoria was involved in a fatality at a foot crossing near Pulborough, resulting in the line being closed until about 13:00. Numerous trains were curtailed or cancelled, but a few were diverted via Hove. All trains in and out of Victoria were halted for about an hour from 10:30, because of a trespasser on the track. A few services were diverted to London Bridge or Blackfriars. Cancellations continued until the middle of the afternoon.

**Tuesday 4 June:** A track circuit failure on the up line between Norbiton and New Malden caused trains from Shepperton to be diverted via Twickenham for about 1½ hours from midday. Loop services outward via Richmond returned to Waterloo via Hounslow. An overhead line fault between Stratford and St Pancras caused an empty train from Temple Mills to become stranded about 15:40. Single line working was necessary until after 18:00, causing delays and the cancellation of a few Southeastern trains.

**Wednesday 5 June:** The up fast line at Weybridge was blocked from 12:00 because of defective track. All up trains had to use the up slow line for the rest of the day. In order to provide capacity for this most ran non-stop. A track circuit failure about 15:30 on the down fast line at Thornton Heath could not be rectified for 5½ hours. Trains had to be cautioned past a signal at danger, causing a few minutes delay, but most East Grinstead trains were diverted via Crystal Palace. Some fast trains were diverted to the down slow line. A power supply failure caused the 18:32 Welwyn Garden City to Sevenoaks to become stranded following departure from Eynsford. The down line was blocked for the rest of the day, with trains diverted via Orpington.

**Thursday 6 June:** An axle-counter failure prevented trains leaving Bournemouth Depot between 05:00 and 08:00, resulting in numerous cancellations and disruption for most of the morning. Matters were made worse when the 09:50 Waterloo to Yeovil Junction hit an obstruction at Hook. It terminated at Basingstoke about 12:15. There were no trains to or from Shepperton after the 20:42 from Waterloo, because a bike was thrown onto the line at Fulwell, causing a short circuit.

**Friday 7 June:** The line was closed for about two hours after the 09:20 Southampton Central to Brighton was involved in a fatality at Bedhampton. Most trains were cancelled or curtailed, but some between Portsmouth and Waterloo were diverted via Winchester. Disruption continued throughout the afternoon.

**Saturday 8 June:** All lines were blocked for about an hour after a person was hit by the 09:50 Waterloo to Woking at New Malden. The down slow line was blocked for about two hours. The 08:45 from Portsmouth Harbour and the 09:44 from Alton were diverted via Chertsey and the 10:34 from Guildford via Cobham was diverted via Epsom, but otherwise services were delayed, curtailed or cancelled. Disruption continued into the afternoon.

**Tuesday 11 June:** Urgent track repairs overnight at Southbourne meant that the line did not open until about 05:30. The first three westbound passenger trains from Chichester were cancelled, together with empty stock from Littlehampton and Barnham to work several up services from Portsmouth and Southampton. Units 450104+118 made it out of the depot to form the 06:19 Farnham to Waterloo, but then failed in the station with a brake fault. The up line was blocked and trains were unable to leave the depot for almost 1½ hours. The 06:12 from Alton had to reverse short of the station and returned to Alton. The 06:41 was detained at Bentley and departed Farnham an hour late. With stock and crews out of place, cancellations and delays continued until late morning. A points failure at Basingstoke caused major disruption from 07:00 until late afternoon. A person hit by the 13:13 Brighton to Southampton at Nutbourne was lucky to survive with relatively minor injuries, but the line was closed until about 16:30.

**Wednesday 12 June:** A train from Dollands Moor to Wembley failed at Westenhanger with brake problems about 12:15 and was unable to proceed for two hours. The consist comprised 66067 hauling new units 777035 (Merseyrail) and 555021/22 (Tyne & Wear Metro). Following trains were cancelled or diverted via Canterbury West.

**Thursday 13 June:** A points failure at Crofton Road Junction resulted in trains being diverted via Herne Hill for most of the afternoon. A tree fell onto the line between Tonbridge and Paddock Wood about 18:00.

**Saturday 15 June:** Trees fell onto the line between Hamworthy and Holton Heath, at Frimley and between Brighton and Lewes. The 16:00 Victoria to Epsom Downs failed between Norbury and Thornton Heath, but was able to proceed after the two units were uncoupled. Following trains were diverted via the down fast line until 18:00. A points failure at Charing Cross about 17:00 put three platforms out of use and resulted in some trains being diverted to Cannon Street until 20:00.

**Tuesday 18 June:** An axle counter failure between Battersea Park and Clapham Junction shortly before 08:00 required all down trains to use the slow line for about three hours. Extensive delays resulted, with some trains cancelled. The 16:27 Ashford to Victoria was involved in a fatality at Beckenham Junction. Trains were cancelled or diverted via Catford until 21:30.

**Wednesday 19 June:** The 06:18 Tonbridge to Ramsgate failed between Folkestone and Dover and was assisted forward by another unit after a delay of 1½ hours. The 06:29 Cannon Street to Ramsgate was diverted via Canterbury West, but other trains were delayed or terminated at Folkestone Central.

**Thursday 20 June:** Units 465002+465004 suffered a brake fault near Farningham Road while working the 05:49 Faversham to Cannon Street. After about ¾ hour the train was able to continue to Swanley, where it terminated. The 06:45 Gillingham to Victoria was diverted via Dartford, but other trains were delayed.

**Friday 21 June:** Eastleigh Works shunting locomotive 323 539-7 derailed on the trap points at the exit from the works about 08:20. All trains were halted until it was confirmed the locomotive was clear of all main lines. The 06:42 Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour terminated at Eastleigh and other services were delayed by up to half an hour. The locomotive was rerailed later in the morning.

**Sunday 23 June:** There was a complete loss of signalling in the area controlled from Eastleigh Area Signalling Centre following overnight testing work. Arrangements were made for some trains to operate to or via Eastleigh, but there were no services via Southampton Central all day. Unfortunately, it was possible to procure only a limited number of rail replacement buses. A limited service operated between Brockenhurst and Weymouth. Trains between Portsmouth and Salisbury were diverted via Eastleigh.

**Tuesday 25 June:** The 10:45 Cliffe to Willesden GBRf aggregate train failed at Lewisham Junction and was unable to proceed for four hours. The 11:20 from Sevenoaks was blocked behind it, so terminated at Lewisham. Following trains from Hither Green and Ladywell were unable to call at Lewisham and were diverted via Parks Bridge Junction. Those from Gravesend to Victoria were diverted to Cannon Street.

## RAIL BUSINESS

**Southampton:** The financial incentives offered by DP Ports, the owners of Southampton Docks, to customers who use rail (or electric lorries) to move containers from the port have produced encouraging results. When the new charges and subsidies came in 21% of containers were moved by rail. This has increased to 35%. Each imported container attracts a 'modal shift charge' of £10. That is refunded if the container is moved by rail, with an additional payment if the rail movement is less than 140 miles.

## AROUND THE REGION

**Blackheath:** The dilapidated platform canopies and the footbridge are to be renovated at Blackheath. Rotten timbers will be replaced and the canopy glazing replaced by polycarbonate. The Railway Heritage Trust and the Blackheath Society have given grants to Network Rail towards the cost of the work.

**Southampton:** The City Council has announced plans to rebuild Northam Bridge, which spans the railway Northam Junction.

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