

## REGIONAL REVIEW: AUGUST 2024

### STOCK NOTES

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

30 July: 458410 to Bournemouth  
31 July: 458518 from Bournemouth  
13 August: 458409 to Bournemouth, 458506 from Bournemouth

Workings from Bournemouth continue to stable overnight at Eastleigh, before continuing to Wembley and Widnes. Unit 458511 ran from Wimbledon to Bournemouth on 23 August and is likely to be the next to go to Widnes. Other moves, apart from post-delivery test trips, include:

29 July: 458423+428 Eastleigh to Bournemouth  
8 August: 458428 Bournemouth to Wimbledon  
12 August: 458423 Bournemouth to Wimbledon and 458416+424 Eastleigh to Bournemouth

**Class 465:** Unit 465237 was moved by road from Ely to Great Yarmouth about the end of July for rolling stock dealer ROMIC. This suggests some further use for the train is planned.

**Class 701:** Training on class 701 for most SWR suburban drivers started in August. Further moves, in addition to test trips, have included:

25 July: 701030 Long Marston to Eastleigh  
31 July: 701059 Eastleigh to Long Marston  
31 July: 701518+524 Long Marston to Worcester (terminated short)  
1 August: 701518+524 Worcester to Eastleigh  
13 August: 701509+512 Eastleigh to Long Marston, 701023 Long Marston to Eastleigh  
22 August: 701057 Eastleigh to Long Marston, 701048 Long Marston to Wimbledon

**Class 707:** It is expected that the last class 707 passenger workings for South Western Railway, by 707024+030, will be on 29 August.

### INTERESTING WORKINGS

**Class 18:** Shunter 18014 has joined 18015 working for GBRf at Eastleigh, delivery again being by road.

**Class 20:** Locomotives 20901 and 20905 arrived at Woking Up Yard from Crewe via Kew East on 13 August, with the Balfour Beatty drain clearance train. The train operated locally out of Woking until departing for Bletchley via Kew East on 22 August.

**Class 50:** Following repainting at Eastleigh Works, 50007+50049 ran to Kidderminster via Basingstoke and Oxford on 9 August.

**Class 201:** DEMU 1001 worked an excursion from Tonbridge to Warminster via Selhurst, Herne Hill, Waterloo, Andover and Salisbury on 17 August. The unit recessed at Westbury and the return was as outward, except for running via Southampton instead of Andover.

**Class 438 (4TC):** On 27 July 33012 and the London Underground 4TC were used for a railtour from Basingstoke to Parkend on the Dean Forest Railway. The outward route was via Wimbledon, Streatham, Herne Hill, Clapham Junction, Twickenham, Reading and Gloucester. The train returned to Clapham Junction via Gloucester, Reading West, Basingstoke, Wimbledon, Streatham and Herne Hill. 66793 was added at Basingstoke to work top and tail with 33012.

The train stabled overnight at Acton Lane and next day was used for a tour from Fenchurch Street to Harwich, Ipswich, Clacton-on-Sea and Walton-on-the-Naze. The TC unit, together with Metropolitan locomotive No 5 Sarah Siddons, was worked from Eastleigh to West Ruislip via Reading and Greenford on 6 August, with 73213+73141+73128 on the front and 73109 bringing up the rear. The previous day 73109 and 73213 had topped and tailed a test trip with No 5 from Eastleigh to Fareham and back.

**Class 455:** Units 455705 and blue/grey 455868 worked the 17:50 Waterloo to Reading and 19:39 return on 14 August. This is part of a diagram covering a few evening peak workings, so was the units' only visit to Reading.

**Excursions:** The following all worked top and tail:

3 August: 60028 and 60055 on a railtour from Derby via Kensington to Chessington Goods, Waterloo and Hove.  
 7 August: 47593 and 47810 from Peterborough to Weymouth via Kew East and Chertsey.  
 15 August: 57311 and 57315 from Birmingham International to Weymouth via Banbury and Swindon.  
 17 August: 57311 and 47810 from Poole to Kingswear via Eastleigh, Salisbury and Westbury.  
 24 August: 47593 and 47805 from Nantwich to Weymouth via Didcot and Basingstoke.

## 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.

P4	23 June to 20 July	MAA to 20 July
All TOCs	68.0%	67.4%
SWR	67.9% (11 <sup>th</sup> )	66.7% (12 <sup>th</sup> )
GTR	67.7% (12 <sup>th</sup> )	68.2% (10 <sup>th</sup> )
SE	68.8% (10 <sup>th</sup> )	67.7% (11 <sup>th</sup> )

**Wednesday 24 July:** A signalling failure at Oxted about 08:30 caused delays and cancellations for the rest of the morning. A signalling problem at Longhedge Junction about 09:00 resulted in trains from Dalston Junction to Clapham Junction being cut back to Surrey Quays until midday. A lineside fire south of Clapham Junction caused the Wessex main fast lines to be blocked during the early afternoon. All trains had to use the slow lines, with Shepperton services diverted via Twickenham to ease congestion.

**Friday 26 July:** A points failure at Battersea Park about 08:30 resulted in Gatwick Express and various Southern services being cancelled for the rest of the morning. A signalling failure at Charing Cross prevented use of platforms 1 to 3 throughout the evening. Some trains were diverted to Victoria or Cannon Street or turned back at London Bridge.

**Saturday 27 July:** There was a complete loss of signalling on the down line between Guildford and Shalford Junction for about two hours shortly after 11:00. Waterloo to Portsmouth trains were diverted via Winchester.

**Monday 29 July:** A signalling problem at Clapham Junction reduced capacity on the up Brighton lines during the morning. Some trains were diverted to London Bridge and some others, including Gatwick Express were cancelled. A signal failure between Romsey and Salisbury resulted in the line being closed throughout the afternoon.

**Tuesday 30 July:** Trains from Portsmouth to Waterloo via Winchester from the 14:55 onwards were diverted via St Denys, because of a signalling problem between Fareham and Eastleigh.

**Wednesday 31 July:** A track defect at Charing Cross put platform 5 out of use, with Hastings trains diverted to Cannon Street for six hours from 10:30. A track circuit failure between Lewisham and Hither Green during the afternoon resulted in some Sidcup line trains being diverted via Bexleyheath. Stopping trains from Charing Cross to Sevenoaks ran via Parks Bridge Junction.

**Thursday 1 August:** Unit 377402 collided with buffer stops at Lovers Walk Depot early in the morning. That caused damage to power cables supplying the line between Brighton and Preston Park and trains were unable to leave the depot. Some trains were diverted via Hove, but many were cancelled or curtailed. Trains were able to run between Brighton and Preston Park shortly after 07:00, but still with numerous cancellations and delays. An unrelated power failure at Preston Park later in the morning caused further disruption. Possessions and isolations to deal with that and the damage at Lovers Walk resulted in numerous cancellations until late afternoon. 07:46 from Sheerness was delayed by 45 minutes and the 07:23 from Sittingbourne terminated at Swale, because of a cow on the line. The service was

suspended and resumed with the 10:23 from Sittingbourne, after the cow had been rounded up. Morning peak trains via St Helier were subject to cancellation or delay, because of a lineside fire. A points failure at Bognor Regis resulted in the Barnham shuttle being suspended until late afternoon, though Victoria trains were still able to run. A power failure caused services on the Isle of Wight to cease about 13:30 and not resume until after 16:00. Heavy rain caused the line to be flooded between Shawford and Winchester, resulting in the line being closed for about two hours from 18:00. There were also flooding problems at Hook, Farnborough and Farnham.

**Friday 2 August:** A failed train on the Isle of Wight meant that the first service was at 07:45 from Ryde Pier Head and many later trains were cancelled. A points failure at Basingstoke disrupted morning peak services, with up trains being badly delayed.

**Sunday 4 August:** The 06:43 from Portsmouth Harbour was involved in a fatality at Esher, resulting in the line being closed until late morning. Some trains were diverted via Chertsey or Cobham, but many were cancelled or terminated short.

**Monday 5 August:** A signalling problem at Hove prevented trains running towards Brighton from 14:30 until after 17:00. Trains were cancelled, terminated short or were diverted to Littlehampton. Trains from Littlehampton to Victoria were diverted via Crawley while repairs were carried out at Hove.

**Tuesday 6 August:** There were no trains via South Bermondsey until 11:00, following the discovery of a body on the track. Services between London Bridge, Beckenham Junction and East Croydon via Tulse Hill were all cancelled. The 09:00 Gatwick Airport to Reading was involved in a fatality near Earley, resulting in the line being closed until midday. Trains from Waterloo turned back at Wokingham, with ones from Gatwick terminating at Guildford. There were no trains between Wimbledon and Sutton for about two hours from 16:30, because of a points failure at Wimbledon. An electrical fire in a shop unit resulted in Victoria station being evacuated for almost an hour from 19:40. Various trains were stranded outside the station and others terminated short. There were delays and cancellations for the rest of the evening. Sidcup and Hayes trains were again unable to call at Lewisham during the evening, because of a signalling fault.

**Wednesday 7 August:** Two early morning trains to Cannon Street failed en route, causing significant disruption until 10:00. The two class 465 units forming the 05:35 from Slade Green became uncoupled at North Kent East Jn. The 05:46 from Barnehurst was delayed by ten minutes at St Johns by a traction fault and then for a further twenty minutes at New Cross. It terminated at London Bridge. A points failure at Brighton about 20:30 put platforms 3, 4 and 5 out of use for over an hour, leaving just platforms 6, 7 and 8 available for main line and East Coastway trains. The 19:20 from Southampton, scheduled to use platform 3, was diverted via Preston Park to platform 8. Gatwick Express terminated at Haywards Heath.

**Thursday 8 August:** A points failure at Woking meant that throughout the day and on Friday trains from Guildford could only arrive on the down line, making use of the bidirectional signalling. Many were diverted via Cobham. A track circuit failure at Lewisham about 18:00 prevented use of the crossovers west of the station for an hour. Among the services affected was a freight train from Allington to Whatley Quarry which was detained on the line from Blackheath until the fault was cleared. The following 16:56 Cannon Street roundabout was held at Kidbrooke for an hour, as was the 17:44 from Dartford at Eltham. Trains behind those were diverted via Sidcup and various other trains ran via Parks Bridge Junction.

**Friday 9 August:** A points failure at Blackfriars about 07:30 prevented trains running from London Bridge for almost three hours. The service was already badly disrupted by a major signalling failure at Harpenden, with numerous cancellations. Some trains were diverted via Tulse Hill. A points failure at Windmill Bridge Junction made matters worse during the afternoon. Delays and cancellations to Thameslink services continued for the rest of the day.

**Saturday 10 August:** The 06:12 Southampton Central to Waterloo via Havant failed at Cosham and terminated there. A track defect at Earlsfield caused delays to suburban trains during the afternoon. Shepperton services were diverted via Richmond. A track circuit failure at Selhurst caused significant disruption from 16:00, with numerous cancellations and delays for the rest of the day. A few Epsom Downs trains were diverted via Mitcham Junction.

**Monday 12 August:** A points failure about 09:00 at Nine Elms severely disrupted Windsor line services for the rest of the day. The 09:00 Kingston loop service was stranded on the down Windsor fast line and returned to Vauxhall about 10:00 after the following 09:03 Waterloo to Windsor had terminated there and moved clear. Trains ran either via the Windsor reversible line or from the main line platforms via the down main fast, crossing to the Windsor line at Queenstown Road, but many were cancelled. There were no trains between Streatham and Wimbledon during the afternoon while loose pigeon netting was removed from an overbridge at Tooting. Trains were diverted to and from Sutton via Mitcham Junction. A shuttle service operated between Wimbledon and Sutton. The 13:31 from Hastings was involved in a fatality between Etchingam and Stonegate, causing services to be suspended until after 18:00. A track failure at

Haslemere caused major disruption from later afternoon onwards. The 16:58 Fareham to Waterloo turned back at Havant and was diverted via Winchester. The 17:15 from Portsmouth Harbour was also diverted via Winchester, but many trains were cancelled. A points failure at Nunhead about 17:00 resulted in only down Catford loop trains running for four hours. Trains between Victoria and Gravesend were diverted to Cannon Street or cancelled and all up trains through Shortlands ran via Herne Hill. The problem was not fixed until the middle of Tuesday afternoon.

**Wednesday 14 August:** A points failure put platforms 4, 5 and 6 at Charing Cross out of use during the evening peak. Many trains were cancelled, diverted to Cannon Street or Victoria or terminated at London Bridge.

**Thursday 15 August:** Morning peak services were disrupted by a signalling fault at Earlsfield, requiring some suburban services to be diverted to the fast lines. Cobham trains ran non-stop between Surbiton and Waterloo and Epsom trains were fast from Raynes Park. Shepperton trains were diverted via Richmond. The 18:37 Waterloo to Twickenham terminated at Chiswick, because of a minor electrical fire on unit 458420.

**Friday 16 August:** Early morning services through Lewes were delayed or cancelled, because of a tree on the line. The 11:03 Waterloo to Windsor, formed of units 450087+038, terminated at Clapham Junction, because of a problem with the doors. The line between Chichester and Havant was closed for the rest of the day after the 21:13 Brighton to Southampton was involved in a fatality at Bosham. The 22:34 Charing Cross to Ramsgate failed on departure from London Bridge and terminated there.

**Saturday 17 August:** The 19:03 Weymouth to Waterloo was involved in a fatality at Swaythling, resulting in the line being closed until shortly before midnight. Isolation of the traction current extended to St Denys, so SWR trains could not be diverted via Havant. They terminated short, were severely delayed or cancelled. Southern trains terminated and started at Fareham. The 16:25 from Manchester turned back at Southampton Airport Parkway and was diverted via Chandlers Ford and Romsey. Other Cross Country trains ran via Laverstock.

**Sunday 18 August:** A points failure at Selhurst caused significant disruption and many cancellations during the morning. Matters were not helped by the line via Crystal Palace being closed for engineering work. Some services were diverted to London Bridge and most between Victoria and Sutton via West Croydon were diverted via Mitcham Junction. Hardly any Gatwick Express services ran. Lack of a signaller at Tonbridge resulted in there being no trains between Tonbridge and Robertsbridge for most of the morning. A car being pursued by the police was driven onto the railway at Thorpe Lane level crossing, between Staines and Egham about 23:30. The 22:54 Reading to Waterloo and 23:39 Waterloo to Reading were diverted via Chertsey; other trains from Waterloo terminated at Staines.

**Monday 19 August:** All lines in the New Malden area were closed for about two hours during the afternoon, because a person being pursued by the police fled onto the railway. Isolation of the current affected the Epsom line as well as the main line. Trains were severely delayed or cancelled, with disruption continuing until the close of service.

**Tuesday 20 August:** Unit 450003 failed approaching Southampton Central while working the 06:48 from Portsmouth & Southsea. It managed to reach the station 20 minutes late, delaying other services.

**Wednesday 21 August:** The 14:52 Waterloo to Weybridge, units 458423+413, suffered an unwanted brake application when crossing to the down Windsor fast line at Queenstown Road. That blocked both of the down lines and the reversible line can only be used by down trains as far as West London Junction, so no Windsor line trains were able to run from Waterloo. The following 15:00 Kingston Loop train terminated at Queenstown Road and the 15:07 Hounslow Loop service was held at Vauxhall. After about an hour it was possible to release the brakes from the rear cab of the 14:52, allowing the train to set back and normal operation to resume.

**Thursday 22 August:** The GBRf 06:53 Dollands Moor to Daventry freight became divided, with the rear of the train stranded across Longhedge Junction. Difficulties in repairing the coupling and brake system meant that the complete train could not continue its journey until about 18:30. London Overground services between Dalston Junction and Clapham Junction were diverted to Battersea Park. Two freight trains, the 08:21 West Ruislip HS2 to Grain and the 09:01 Eastleigh to Hoo Junction, had to be held on the up Windsor slow line, blocking platform 3 at Clapham Junction, until the route was clear. It was possible to run the off-peak service with very little disruption, but some evening peak trains had to be cancelled. A number of other freight trains were cancelled, including the gypsum empties from Mountfield to Southampton Western Docks and the loaded return. A points failure at Grove Park caused delays to evening services.

**Friday 23 August:** The 05:20 Broadstairs to St Pancras hit a tree on the line between Sittingbourne, damaging the nose cone and shoe gear of unit 395011. The train was eventually able to continue to Newington, where it terminated about 08:10, and was later assisted by another unit to Ashford Depot. Most trains were curtailed or cancelled while the tree was being cleared from the line, but the 06:40 Victoria to Dover and Ramsgate was diverted via Tonbridge and Folkestone. Disruption continued for the rest of the morning.

**Saturday 24 August:** A suspected broken rail at Earley resulted in services between Wokingham and Reading being suspended for almost four hours from 08:20.

**Sunday 25 August:** The 16:33 Strood to Paddock Wood was delayed by 1½ hours at Snodland by a tree on the line. Meantime, other trains operated between Paddock Wood and Maidstone West only. A power failure at Blackfriars about 17:30 caused major disruption to Thameslink services for the rest of the day. Trains were severely delayed and many were cancelled.

**Monday 26 August:** The 10:15 Portsmouth Harbour to Waterloo terminated at Fratton, because of a problem with the doors.

## RAIL BUSINESS

**Promo Advance Tickets:** Govia Thameslink Railway had a special offer of significantly discounted, advance purchase return tickets. These were mostly between London and selected South Coast resorts at no more than £5, but included Southampton and Hastings to Brighton. Journeys could be made between 20 August and 3 September and tickets had to be purchased by 19 August. However, the press release announcing this was issued at 15:52 on 19 August and there was no publicity on Facebook or X, so did anyone find out in time to take advantage of the offer?

**Pay as You Go** ticketing is being introduced at more stations outside the London Travelcard area in September. SWR stations are all from Ashford (Surrey) to Windsor and Virginia Water, plus Kempton Park to Shepperton. Stations managed by Southeastern are Sevenoaks to Eynsford, plus Dunton Green, though Eynsford, Shoreham and Bat & Ball are served only by Thameslink. Pay as you go has been possible at stations between Merstham and Gatwick Airport since January 2016.

**Restore Your Railway:** The Government has announced the cancellation of its predecessor's Restore Your Railway Fund, but with individual schemes to be reviewed. The only project within the Southern Electric area to benefit from RYR was construction of Thanet Parkway station. Providing a passenger service from Totton to Marchwood was accepted for development, but it now seems that is unlikely to progress any time soon.

**Govia Thameslink Railway Community Fund:** GTR has given grants totalling £448,000 to community organisations in its area. Many of these are to groups who tackle problems such as mental illness, anti-social behaviour and homelessness. Some grants are of direct benefit to the railway, with recipients including:

- Coulsdon South Station Partnership, to rejuvenate unused land next to the station for community use
- Balcombe Guerrilla Gardeners, who maintain the planters on the station platforms
- Friends of Ore Station, to create a garden on waste land at the station
- Brighton Toy Museum, to improve the lighting and general environment in Trafalgar Street underpass below Brighton station forecourt

## AROUND THE REGION

**Faversham:** Faversham Community Land Trust is proposing to renovate the long-derelict engine shed and carriage shed in the fork of the junction of the Ramsgate and Dover lines at Faversham. Both buildings date from about 1900 and are listed Grade II. They have survived because they were used by British Railways to house an emergency control train, for use in event of a war. It has previously been impossible to find any use for the buildings, because there is no means of access to them, other than from the railway line. The Trust proposes to create a road access though part of a playing field and cemetery owned by Swale Borough Council. The Council appears to be supportive and there have been no burials in the part of the cemetery that is required. It is also proposed to have pedestrian access by means of a ramp from the long footbridge that spans both railway lines. The Trust envisages a mixture of commercial and community uses of the sheds. They say that this is an ambitious and complex long-term project and they will need to mount a major fundraising campaign.

**Grain Branch:** Up trains are subject to a 10 mph speed restriction over Stoke Creek user-worked level crossing, because of poor sighting. Normally, a driver must maintain a lower speed until the entire train is clear of a restriction. As an experiment, trains may accelerate at Stoke Creek as soon as the cab has reached the 40 mph restriction sign beyond the crossing. This concession is indicated by a black letter A in a white circle below the 40 sign. It is only on the approach to the crossing that the low speed is important. It is very unlikely that a road user would fail to see a train once it was on the crossing.

**Shortlands:** A new footbridge with lifts is being erected at the station.

**Blackheath Tunnel:** The line between Blackheath and Charlton re-opened on 11 August, following repairs to Blackheath Tunnel, though in absence of a Sunday service passenger trains did not resume until the following day. The line had been closed since 1 June. The work included replacing water-damaged brickwork, rebuilding the drainage system and lining the tunnel with concrete. Track repairs were also carried out.

**Crystal Palace:** There are no trains between Crystal Palace, Streatham Hill and Tulse Hill from 24 August to 1 September and Crystal Palace station was closed on 24 to 26 August. This is to allow track renewals and signalling work.

**Waterloo:** A display showing the history of Waterloo station has been installed on platform 24.

**Richmond:** As part of a wider project to improve the town centre, Richmond Council is to contribute to the cost of refurbishing the station building, particularly the art deco frontage.

**Guildford:** An eight floor multi-storey station car park is under construction adjacent to platform 1.

**Havant:** The footbridge west of Havant station was built in 1947 and needs to be replaced. It is in poor condition and does not meet modern accessibility standards. The bridge is the responsibility of Hampshire County Council, but Havant Borough Council has agreed to contribute £2.8M to the total cost of about £10M.

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