

REGIONAL REVIEW: FEBRUARY 2026

CLASS 455

Unit 455871 is being preserved by Southern Electric Traction Group and has joined 4Vep 3417 at Strawberry Hill. It may be joined by a second 455. It is intended that the unit will be maintained in a fit state to run on the national network and will be used on excursions to raise funds for the preservation of the 4Vep.

Further passenger workings have been:

3 February: 455721+455732 worked 06:39 to Dorking and 07:48 return, 09:03, 14:03 & 19:03 to Guildford via Cobham and 10:34, 15:34 & 20:34 return, 11:50, 16:50 & 21:50 to Woking and 13:03, 18:03 & 23:04 return. 455717+455727 worked 18:43 & 20:42 to Shepperton and 19:36 & 21:41 return.

4 February: 455717+455727 were out again, working the 455 diagram that starts with 05:54 from Hampton Court and finishes with 23:04 from Woking.

18 February: 455717+455727 on 07:52 from Surbiton, 08:53, 13:53 & 18:53 to Guildford via Epsom and 10:45, 15:28 & 20:45 return, 12:06 & 17:06 to Hampton Court and 12:54 & 17:54 return.

Recent moves from Wimbledon to Derby have been:

2 February: 455719+455729

16 February: 455873 (the last 455/8)

STOCK NOTES

Class 458: The last two class 458/5 units, 458530 and 458533, remain in service on their diagrammed workings. With class 701/5 units, which can be used on Chertsey Loop services, coming out of store, their remaining time may be limited.

Class 465: Unit 465045 was moved from Slade Green to Dollands Moor for storage on 7 February.

Class 466: Units 466012+466020 were hauled from Gillingham to Kingsbury, for scrapping, on 31 January, followed by 466041 on 12 February.

Class 701: Further moves from Long Marston to Wimbledon, including some five-coach units, have been:

28 January 701023

11 February 701520+701522

16 February 701509+701512

23 February 701049

INTERESTING WORKINGS

Class 20: The final deliveries of Tyne & Wear Metro units ran from Dollands Moor to Wembley ran during the evening on 4 and 18 February, in both cases hauled by 20007 and 20205. The regular route was via Orpington and Catford.

Class 31: On 24 February locomotive 31128 hauled a defective mobile maintenance train from Basingstoke to Plasser at West Ealing via Reading. This is one of just two class 31s still registered to work on the national network, so a rare visitor.

Class 377: On 11 February the 06:28 Eastbourne to Victoria and 08:24 return was formed of units 387204+387303+387174, so one red, one white and one green. Any Italian passengers should have been pleased.

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.

P11	4 to 31 January	MAA to 31 January
GB	67.1%	66.66%
SWR	65.90% (13 th)	65.05% (13 th)
GTR	66.61% (12 th)	67.61% (10 th)
SE	67.60% (11 th)	66.99% (11 th)

Thursday 29 January: A signalling problem between Brockenhurst and Bournemouth caused serious disruption from 08:00. Very few trains ran during the rest of the morning and there were delays and cancellations for the rest of the day. A points failure at Havant about 17:00 caused delays and cancellations until the close of service.

Friday 30 January: The 07:24 Weymouth to Waterloo was involved in a fatality at Wool, resulting in the line being closed until 10:00. An electrical fault at Cosham about 17:40 resulting in the conductor rails being isolated for the rest of the day, causing many cancellations and delays. Trains between Waterloo and Portsmouth via Winchester were diverted via Havant. Southern services terminated at Havant, were diverted to Bognor Regis or were cancelled entirely.

Sunday 1 February: The 07:33 Portsmouth Harbour to Waterloo terminated at Woking, because of a problem with the doors.

Monday 2 February: A signalling problem between Totton and Brockenhurst caused disruption throughout the day. Local trains between Winchester and Bournemouth were cancelled, with other trains making additional stops.

Tuesday 3 February: The 11:03 from Weymouth suffered a brake problem and terminated at Surbiton. A GBRf infrastructure train from Hoo Junction to Eastleigh failed at Barnes about 16:00, with a brake fault. It had been crossing to the Hounslow loop, so was blocking that and the line from Richmond. It was able to move clear of the junction about 20:00, but returned from Kew Bridge to Hoo Junction with an assisting locomotive about 22:30. The 18:00 Waterloo to Portsmouth Harbour was diverted via Winchester, because of a points failure at Haslemere.

Wednesday 4 February: Unit 377464 became derailed on leaving Selhurst Depot towards Norwood Junction with 377444 about 05:45. Initially, both of the up lines were blocked, but the up fast re-opened by 07:00. 377464 was rerailed by early evening, but track and cable repairs continued. No trains were able to run in or out of the depot for the rest of the day. This resulted in very extensive disruption, with over 300 trains cancelled. London Overground was unable to operate to West Croydon all day. Some trains were diverted to Crystal Palace, but many were cancelled. Most Southern trains via Norwood Junction were cancelled, but services to Caterham, Tattenham Corner and Uckfield did run. Thameslink was already disrupted by a signalling problem between London Bridge and Blackfriars which persisted until the middle of the afternoon and required to service to be reduced. Some trains were able to run via Norwood Junction and others were diverted via Streatham, but again there were many cancellations. The 05:56 Cannon Street to Cannon Street via Woolwich and Bexleyheath was delayed for forty minutes at Woolwich Dockyard, because of a fault on units 465153+465030. It ran empty to Slade Green Depot. The 09:15 from Gillingham terminated at Meopham, because of an overhanging tree. Other trains were delayed, cancelled or diverted via Dartford until the tree was removed later in the morning. A signalling problem at Barnes prevented trains running towards Hounslow during the afternoon and evening. Trains to Weybridge were diverted via Richmond and the evening peak Hounslow Loop services were cancelled.

Thursday 5 February: The 06:15 Maidstone East to Ashford, unit 377121, failed at Charing, with a brake fault. The 06:05 from Victoria was held at Harrietsham and the 06:55 at Bearsted. Following trains were cancelled or diverted via Bat & Ball. An assisting unit came from Ashford and the failed train was on the move about 09:20. Locomotive 37099 failed at Aldershot while working an overnight infrastructure monitoring train. It was blocking platform 2, the down line, until 66847 arrived during the afternoon to assist. A driving trailer vehicle was at the London end of the train, with lighting equipment that might be damaged if a locomotive was attached. Therefore, the train was hauled to the Mid Hants Railway, where the lights could be removed, before 66847 could haul it to Woking Up Yard. Trains to Alton and Farnham were able to run via platform 3, the down loop. Ascot trains terminate and start in platform 3, but fortunately have a short turnround, so passenger services were not disrupted. A signalling failure at Bedhampton caused services to be disrupted for the rest of the day. As usual when things go wrong in the Portsmouth area, it was Southern that was worst affected, with trains cancelled or terminating short.

Friday 6 February: Morning peak services were delayed by flooding at Richmond. Some trains were cancelled or diverted via Hounslow. A signal failure on the up fast line between Raynes Park and Wimbledon about 10:00 resulted in trains

being diverted to the up slow until 14:30. Up Shepperton trains were diverted via Richmond, to release capacity for this. An electrical fault at Selhurst caused loss of power to the up fast line. Trains were diverted to the up slow line for 1½ hours from 11:00, with consequent delays. A few services were diverted via Crystal Palace. The signalling at Bedhampton was rectified overnight, but failed again about 13:30, causing disruption for the rest of the afternoon. A track circuit failure at Blackfriars caused the Thameslink service to be reduced during the afternoon and evening. This included the Rainham service being reduced to a shuttle from Dartford. Trains did not stop at Egham after 22:25, following several youths suffering knife wounds at the station.

Saturday 7 February: Unit 484004 failed at Shanklin having arrived with the 07:26 from Ryde Pier Head. The 08:03 from Ryde Pier Head terminated at St Johns Road and there were no more trains until the 10:47 to Shanklin. There was an hourly service until two trains an hour resumed with the 18:03 from Ryde Pier Head. The 15:41 from Shepperton collided with a large tree Kempton Park and Hampton breaking windows of unit 701020. Trains terminated at Fulwell until the 21:42 from Waterloo was able to run though, quarter of an hour late.

Sunday 8 February: A track circuit failure on the down slow line at Weybridge meant that all trains had to use the down fast from Hampton Court Junction to Woking from 09:30 until late evening, so only up trains could call at intermediate stations.

Monday 9 February: A track fault caused loss of traction current at Tunbridge Wells about 10:50. A limited service operated during the afternoon, with all trains having to use the up line through Wells Tunnel and Tunbridge Wells station. Hastings trains ran during the evening, but Tunbridge Wells terminators were cancelled. The 16:20 Southampton to Brighton became disabled on hitting a traffic cone on the track between Portchester and Cosham. The 16:50 from Southampton terminated at Fareham and train was used to evacuate passengers from the 16:20 and return them to Fareham. The 16:20 was eventually able to proceed empty about 21:00. Meantime, trains terminated at Fareham or Southampton and trains from Waterloo to Portsmouth via Winchester were diverted via Havant.

Tuesday 10 February: A track maintenance machine returning to Basingstoke after a night's work failed on the down fast line near Hook. Trains had to be diverted to the down slow until a locomotive could come from Eastleigh to haul the machine forward shortly before midday. A signal failure at Queenstown Road required down Windsor line trains to run through the station on the up line for about 1½ hours from 10:00. On top of that, the down main slow was blocked at Waterloo for much of the morning. A signalling problem at East Croydon caused delays from 09:30 into the afternoon. A loss of power to signals between Haslemere and Liphook about 14:00 caused trains to be significantly delayed for the rest of the day, with some diverted via Winchester. Many evening trains were cancelled. There are emergency batteries to feed the signals, but they became exhausted after a prolonged outage. A signalling problem between Lewisham and Ladywell caused disruption during the evening, with some Hayes trains diverted to Orpington.

Wednesday 11 February: The empty stock to form the 06:44 to Charing Cross failed at Strood, because of a fault on unit 466006. It was revived to work the service about half an hour late, but there were delays to other trains as well. The 21:15 Cannon Street to Cannon Street was involved in a fatality near Westcombe Park on its inward journey, resulting in the line being blocked until after midnight.

Thursday 12 February: A points failure at Stratford International about 11:30 caused delays and a few cancellations until late afternoon. A few trains to St Pancras turned back at Stratford. SWR services were severely disrupted for the rest of the day after the 13:54 from Basingstoke was involved in a fatality at Clapham Junction. There lengthy delays and many cancellations. Some main line trains were diverted via Chertsey. There were no trains to Sheerness after the 17:53 from Sittingbourne, because of a signalling failure between Kemsley and Swale.

Friday 13 February: Further signalling problems in the Christchurch area caused serious disruption for most of the day.

Sunday 15 February: A power failure between Ashford International and Maidstone East caused severe delays and cancellations during the afternoon. The 16:15 Southampton Central to Stockport was involved in a fatality at Shawford, resulting in the service being severely disrupted for the rest of the day. Engineering work between Portsmouth and Petersfield prevented diversions via Havant.

Monday 16 February: The 13:59 Gatwick Airport to Reading hit a tree on the line at Shalford, causing the line to be closed for about three hours. A limited service operated between Reading and Guildford and disruption continued into the evening.

Wednesday 18 February: A track fault on the up slow line at South Croydon caused delays from 11:00 until late afternoon. Reigate trains and Gatwick Express were cancelled, to create additional capacity on the up fast.

Thursday 19 February: An empty aviation fuel train from Colnbrook to Grain failed at Hoo Junction about 10:00, blocking the up line and causing delays of about half an hour to following trains. Unit 377519, working the 10:15 Gillingham to Victoria failed in Gillingham Tunnel. It was over an hour before it was able to set back into Gillingham station.

Friday 20 February: A traction power failure resulted in the 16:06 Charing Cross to Barnehurst becoming stranded on the Crayford Spur for an hour.

Saturday 21 February: A signalling failure resulted in all lines through Staines being blocked from 07:00 until 10:20. Some Reading trains were diverted via Chertsey, but most services were cancelled. A points failure just north of Three Bridges restricted use of the down fast line for most of the day. Units 377105+377210 failed at Epsom Downs, having arrived with the 15:00 from Victoria. They departed empty for Selhurst Depot at 17:45 and normal service resumed with the 18:00 from Victoria. Meantime, other trains terminated at Sutton or Belmont, or were cancelled entirely.

RAIL BUSINESS

Freightliner: The sale of Freightliner's intermodal business to shipping and logistics company CMA CGM Group was completed in January. Genesee & Wyoming Inc retains Freightliner Heavy Haul, which has been rebranded Heavy Haul Rail.

AROUND THE REGION

Ashford to Hastings: On Friday 13 January the Mayors of Ashford, Rye and Hastings made a special trip between Hastings and Ashford (believed to be on the 11:50 from Eastbourne), to mark the 175th anniversary of the opening of the railway on 13 February 1851.

Gravesend to Dartford: Work undertaken while the line was closed from 14 to 22 February, for relaying Dartford Junction included:

- Provision of LED lighting and additional information screens at Northfleet
- Deep cleaning Swanscombe station
- Refurbishing the accessible toilet at Greenhithe
- Repainting and lift maintenance at Dartford

Tunbridge Wells: A new shop, to heritage design, has been completed on the up platform.

Peckham Rye: Notwithstanding the Department for Transport's announcement last July that refurbishment of Peckham Rye station had been deferred on financial grounds, some work is to proceed. It has been realised that the planning permission would lapse if some work was not started. The booking hall will be repainted and have improved lighting and the canopies on the Catford Loop platforms will be refurbished. The Department for Transport is contributing £3.9M to the cost and about £1M is expected from Southwark Council and the Railway Heritage Trust. The work is expected to be completed by summer 2027. However, provision of lifts to the platforms and other proposed improvements are not proceeding.

Ockley: The line between Dorking and Horsham reopened on 16 February, following repairs to the embankment at Ockley which suffered a landslip on 27 January.

New Malden: South Western Railway has refurbished the up side waiting room at New Malden station with a Korean theme, reflecting that New Malden is home to Europe's largest Korean community. SWR worked with New Malden Residents' Association who adopted the station in 2022. The waiting room features photographs of sculptures by Korean artist Meekyoung Shin, as well as a station name sign in Korean. The Railway Heritage Trust provided a grant to renovate period windows at the station. The waiting room was formally reopened by the Mayor of Kingston on 17 February, which was Seollal, the Korean Lunar New Year holiday.

CREDITS: Colin Duff, John Goodrich, Stuart Hicks