

KATALog Web Update No: 1/67 [by T.A.] Spring - 1st April 2009
(following final paper edition KATALog #66 - 1st Dec 2008)

NB: Please note that the KATA quarterly meetings are now at the new time of 15:00 on the new day of Wednesdays but still in the small bar of the old Druids Head, Market Place.

Dates:- Wednesdays: 3rd June, 2nd September and 2nd December .

KATAlist – bus route changes...

Sat 2nd May

490 (T5 – Richmond) Withdrawn from Lower Mortlake Road and rerouted to Pools on the Park towards Twickenham Bridge.

H37 (Hounslow – Richmond) Extended from Station to Manor Circus, thus taking up the current 490 stand.

Sun 3rd May

267 (Hammersmith – Fulwell – Hampton Court) Summer Sunday extension to H.Court resurrected but note that timetables on the extension only appear on stops TO the Palace! Runs 'till 27 Sept inc.

Sat 30th May

S3 (Sutton – Worcester Park) This is the latest date for the extension to Malden Manor that was expected to happen 15months ago.

Sat 4th July

The Kingston Tranche (57,65,71,85,213,265,281,371) was duly announced just days before Xmas with all routes retaining the same operators, but with these changes:-

57 (Kingston - Clapham Park) New timetable.

65* (Ealing – Kingston) New timetable and extended at night via route 71 to CWA, thus becoming N65, instead of 24hr ! This replaces the notion of a 24hr 71!

71 (Kingston – Chesington WofA) New timetable.

85 (Putney – Kingston) Not due to be extended to Seething Wells but will run in service in Kingston town centre via route 371 serving Eden St and High St (and reverse) but accordingly not Fairfield Bus Stn where it currently only sets-down.

N213 (Kingston – Sutton – Croydon) It is unclear if this will still run beyond Sutton by being replaced with N154 over that section?

281 (Tolworth – Hounslow) Increased evenings and Sundays to every 12mins.

371* (Kingston – Richmond) Still awaiting news on overdue extension to North Sheen Sainsburys, but possibly on 4th July.

*NB: All three north-south routes (65, 71, 371) all will have new buses eventually. Notably the 371 will gain 5 (out of 14) AD Enviro 200Hybrids, that had been destined for TfL's East Thames Buses!

Sat 13th Dec

TfL's retender for route **38** (Clapton Pond – Victoria) means the 47 articulated buses will be replaced with 72 double-decks such is BoJo's obsession with getting rid of the bendies! This 50% increase in vehicles is going to cost an extra £3million.

October 2010 – TfL Service Review

33,131,267,411,641 are our routes due for retender next year and ask if you have any comments on these routes for the KATA submission. Let me know by 5th April.

Previous changes (all non TfL):-

05/01/09

801SDO (Hinchley Wood -Esher-Tiffin Girls) The second bus that started at Esher now back-projected to Hersham Station.

30/01/09

471 (Kingston – Woking) Odd journeys via Woodham Lane rerouted via Coomberlands. New 471 brochure from Travel Surrey.

13/02/09

Esher Circular (actually a figure of 8) ceased despite only being launched on 15 Sept by SCC etc.

For all London's proper bus timetables go to the marvellous and independent:-
Londonbusroutes.net

PUBLICITY

The 5 new **TfL quadrant maps** are dated March 2009 and have more stylised and impressive covers with our SW depicting Kew Gardens, while NW depicts the old art-deco Hoover building on the Great West Road.

The latter includes an inset map of routes serving the new Shepherd's Bush Westfield Shopping Centre, but our SW still shows the 465 serving Brook Street, despite pointing out this error after the past two issues!

A glossy **X26** appeared before Xmas which nicely and clearly includes all 28 bus stops (14 each way).

London Tramlink, as it's called since TfL took it over last Summer, has a A5 brochure which includes all you need to know including the new green/white livery but omits who to complain to. Neither does it mention London TravelWatch whom we have notified.

SCC reissued their **#8/9 Epsom, Dorking** timetable book dated February. These books no longer contain rail times, contrary to the claim in the Spring edition of *Bus User* from BUUK!

And don't forget the only **Greater London Bus Map** (Dec '08) at £1.50 (post free) from Mike Harris 27 Albany Road WICKFORD S12 9BP see: www.busmap.org

Also available from TfL Travel Info Centres (Euston, Liverpool St, Piccadilly & Victoria), LT Museum, Ian Allan Bookshop Waterloo.

The **National Rail website** is riddled with mistakes (as are many poster bus maps at stations) showing local bus services from stations. Notably for Surbiton the 406 is allegedly still served. Also Strawberry Hill is worth a look because of the poor alignment it seems nine routes serve this place! This is being followed up by KATA.

BUS STOPS

The full timetables printed for SCC routes etc which are printed back to back cannot be read when illuminated on TfL stops. KATA has been complaining about these for many moons!

Of the new bus stops expected one has appeared outside Kenneth Gee on Richmond Road for the southbound 65,671,691 thus shortening the long gap between Latchmere Road and The Oak/Sainsburys.

Meanwhile, the new system of buses stopping at all stops where people are apparently waiting etc has resulted in things deteriorating with bus drivers stopping even less than they did before. Let me know your experiences.

EDEN STREET DIVERSION

With all three northbound stops in Eden St (E1, E2, E3) closed a for a month 'till Easter a temporary stop has been on Wheatfield Way/Ashdown Rd. But despite big yellow-on-black notices in Eden St "THIS BUS STOP IS CLOSED" many can still be seen waiting in vain. Interestingly, the 65 alone still picks up in Brook St (G) but then has to turn left to High St, Kingston Hall Road, College Roundabout to Wheatfield Way. While the 371 and K1, K4 do the opposite because after running as normal to the Post Office (old or new) they then turn right into Brook St then left into Wheatfield Way etc.

When is a Bus Lane a bus street or is that vice versa?

Are you sitting comfortably then I'll begin with a bizarre story...

For 30 years there has been much confusion about 'BUSES ONLY' in Eden St from Union St junction to Brook St but is now about to be resolved er, almost. The present northbound 'Bus Lane' is a misnomer in law because it can't be Bus Lane because there is no other traffic lane in that direction. So the solution is to make the road one-way southbound from Brook St to Union St but with a contra-flow bus lane, er where the existing one already is. Hope you're following.

However, the section from Ashdown Rd junction to Neville House remains 'Buses Only' in a two-way street, albeit no other traffic allowed northbound. This is the same set-up as Brook Street, with 'Buses Only' from Wheatfield Way.

The law is so bizarre that enforcement cameras are permitted on contra-flow bus lanes (and will be installed between Union St & Brook St), but are not permitted on Bus Only streets, ie the other sections!

What may also help the deter regular infringements is the fact that the BUS LANE will run continuous from Union St to Neville House (stop E1 served by 281). Thus it will now straddle the bend opposite Ashdown Road and hopefully deter traffic exiting Ashdown Rd from doing a U-turn on the mini-roundabout, after the observed NO RIGHT TURN sign and illegally head up Eden St.

KATA has welcomed the scheme but is asking for better signing for traffic exiting Ashdown Road, and the removal of the mini-roundabout because that gives car drivers the excuse to use the upper bus lane. Note that there are effectively three No entry signs from Union St to Lady Booth Road but dislexic drivers are many.

RBK have launched a consultation ('till 6 April) on **Surbiton Town Centre** or rather Victoria Road to you and me. One option, from 2010, could be to make Vic Rd 'Buses Only' which would be very welcome.

See: www.kingston.gov.uk/surbiton_town_consultation

OMNIBUS

BoJo, not content with axing the Western Congestion Charging zone (from Spring 2010) and allowing vehicles freely into the central area at other times, has cut the free admission to the LT Museum for Freedom Pass holders who now have to pay £8.

Free entry was only introduced by Ken in August 2008 and BoJo is racking back money from pensioners to pay for the his loss of dosh from the Congestion Zone reductions.

He is also sacking 114 staff from City Hall, and 300 from TfL, plus 1,000 from London Underground, but then he never was in favour of public transport. But with these 1,500 jobs going it will not be quiet on the Western Front and disruptions to transport will be inevitable as workers strike in protest .

Also LUL MD Tim O'Toole is deserting the sinking ship and returning to the US in April, after six years.

Plus 30 redundancies at Kingston Guildhall has resulted in the removal of Steve Guess the bus, train and cycling co-ordinator whom KATA has dealt with for 18 years. Steve, also voluntary Treasurer of Buses Worldwide, had been with RBK for 22 years. Now there is no one there with anywhere near a coherent knowledge of public transport.

Meanwhile, BoJo is looking at selling off **East Thames Buses** a bus operator set up by TfL when Harris Bus went bust in 2000. ETB, with 111 buses, is a fall back to continue operating services when operators go bust , and so without it we could be missing a number services in the future.

While the wheels are falling off the Central Confusion Zone they have actually fallen off buses. Recently the **Traffic Commissioner**, not noted for his need to get involved in London's buses, has imposed sanctions against London Central and TfL's very own East Thames Buses after each lost a wheel on a service bus – anyone know which routes? Both LC and ETB had their bus operators disc authorisation reduced by 20 vehicles each.

The saga continues on **bus door exit ramps** since neither Transdev or TfL have done anything to repair the very dangerous disabled ramps that able bodied step on which then drop, causing passengers to fall off. Let me know about those buses that are dangerous, thanks.

Plus, in Epsom in mid-Feb a 406 rammed the back of a 467 - both Transdev.

Lastly, National Express have put their **Travel London/Surrey** up for sale at about £50m, with Singapore based Comfort DelGrow, who own Metroline, taking an interest.

LONDON RAIL

The **tram** that was hit by an Arriva bus last Autumn is believed to have been written off as the damage was so severe. It is understood the bus driver jumped a red light. Two new trams have been ordered to also cope with the increased frequency.

From Xmas the **Circle Line** is to be extended to Hammersmith via both the District and Hammersmith & City lines. Thus we could see the H&CL to Barking disappear?

SWT – TravelWatch informs KATA that 40 out of the 44 SWT stations in the area have had their booking office hours reinstated on orders of the Secretary of State for Transport.

TravelWatch, as indeed KATA, opposed the closures.

However, TravelWatch want to know about queues longer than 15mins in peaks of 5mins off-peak. Let them or KATA know.

The overdue Pay as you go Oyster for SWT is now expected in October. Plus, SWT have scrapped their Emotion mag which was simply glossy propaganda and won't be missed. Elmbridge Council has approved the redevelopment of the 1849 Hampton Court Station.

The new rail timetables commence on **Sunday 17th May** but there are no changes to our lines. And from December SWT propose to run hourly service Waterloo - Exeter, albeit not stopping between Clapham Junction and Woking.

FARES & PASSES

The **Bus & Tram Discount scheme** (Jan 09) replaced Ken's cheaper scheme introduced in Autumn 2007 for those Londoners on Income Support. With this Oyster you pay only 50p per journey capped at £1.65 a day or 7days at £6.90.

And from 1st April those on Job Seekers Allowance will similarly qualify.
Some 150,000 qualify at a cost of just £3m.

Freedom Pass and England Pass

From 1st April certain bus services are to be excluded from free travel by statute of the Dept for Transport, albeit some local authorities may allow free travel on these if stated by them:-

The exclusions as listed in Bus User are:-

- #Where more than half the seats can be reserved in advance.,
- # Service to run for less than six consecutive weeks.,
- #Operated primarily for tourism or an historical bus.,
- # Rail replacement buses.,
- #The fare includes an amenity such as Park&Ride or entrance fee to attraction.

Thus removing express services like National Express between Golders Green or Heathrow and Victoria. Evidently our K50 P&R was eligible last Xmas but as we guessed the issue was being fudged by TfL because the fare-chart omitted any reference to the Freedom Pass etc.

Meanwhile, RBK announced that they could save £4m over the next five years after it and other south London boroughs agreed to reduce payment for the Freedom Pass to TfL because 'we don't have the Tube and DLR'. For its 22,500 FP holders RBK's contribution drops from £21.5m to £17.6m for 2009-2014.

However, the implication that they would have otherwise withheld funding is not viable because in the Act all 33 London boroughs must agree on funding the Pass or the scheme defaults to the control of TfL who in turn charge the boroughs more for doing so.

Press reports wrongly report that free National Rail travel is from 09:00 when it is 09:30.

And Finally, a letter in Bus User highlights the charging by Stagecoach Bedford of under 5s. This was imposed on over 60's England Pass holders with under 5s in tow, but bus drivers were very unhappy and generally ignored the instruction. It was then pointed out to Bedford council that the local subsidy given to Stagecoach (penny pinching owners of SWT) should be recinded for this anti-social act, and a formal letter was sent by the council finance department. Stagecoach replied by saying 'it had all been a misunderstanding and under 5s were to travel free'!

However, the correspondent also discovered that in law there is no stipulation that under 5s must travel free, and that it is something that has simply evolved over time, er, thankfully.

Equally, he points out that child fares, which maybe half or even only a third off the adult rate, can be applied up to either 14, 16 or even 18.

Ewell tidings

Sat 4th April is the 150th anniversary at West Ewell Station and will attended by ex ITN Nick Owen (electric train fan) with a free RT bus service to Nescot. They are tarting up the entrance and grinding kerbs etc.

➤ **Next KATAlog Update will hopefully be by 1st June and possibly bi-monthly.**