

TfL urges strike ballot to be called off



LONDON Underground (LU) has urged TSSA to call off its ballot for industrial action over Tube station staffing plans after it emerged the union supports key elements of LU's customer service improvement plans.

Changes to staffing are proposed as part of a wider vision for the future of the Tube which will involve no compulsory redundancies.

Plans include running 24-hour services at weekends and making more staff visible and available to help passengers buy the right ticket, plan their travel and make their journeys easier.

TSSA has set out the main tenets of its 'Better London Transport' campaign and proposed Passenger Charter. It wants:

- An assurance for disabled passengers that they can turn up at any accessible station and be able to use the Tube
- A friendly face and a helping hand: a visible staff presence throughout all stations
- Well-maintained, safe and secure stations
- Clear communication and updates

These four key points reflect precisely what LU has already committed to delivering under its vision for the future.

LU already offers a 'turn up and go' assistance service for disabled and visually impaired passengers at every station. Improvements are already being made to the accessibility of the network – with more step-free stations, boarding ramps, raised platform sections, more staff training and better signage. LU's plans will make it even easier for disabled customers to get around, particularly as more staff will be available in public areas of stations to help.

As well as staffing all stations from first train to last, and all night when the Tube runs 24-hour services at weekends, LU is continuing to invest billions of pounds in maintaining and improving stations. It is working with policing partners to ensure customers and staff continue to be safe and secure. The crime rate is now at its lowest ever.

In addition to regular announcements and clear real-time information at all stations, plus the latest technology for station staff, a revamped TFL website will launch soon, offering more personalised information and services designed to be used on the move. Data will continue to be freely and openly available to apps developers, while WiFi coverage, already available at 120 stations, will be introduced at all below-ground Tube stations.

There will also be more and improved ticket machines, able to fulfil functions currently only possible within ticket offices, and easier ways to pay for travel, including contactless bank card payment.

Bikes can now board DLR trains

BICYCLES are now allowed on the Docklands Light Railway (DLR) at off-peak times, following a successful six-month trial.

The move is part of the Mayor's Vision for Cycling – the £913m plan to transform the capital into a city where cycling is a key part of everyday life.

DLR director Rory O'Neill said: 'All cyclists are now welcome to use DLR services during off-peak hours and at all times on weekends and Bank Holidays.'

■ To find out more about the Mayor's Cycling Vision, go to tfl.gov.uk/cyclingvision

Tube improvement plan – post weekend update



Piccadilly and Metropolitan lines: 270metres of new drainage was installed between Hillingdon and Ickenham, 800metres of track was replaced between Preston Road and Northwick Park, and 300metres of track between Ruislip Manor and Eastcote.

Northern line: A closure of the Bank and Charing Cross branches allowed new signalling system to be

installed. When the upgrade is complete later this year, the line capacity will increase by a fifth. This is equivalent to an extra 11,000 passengers an hour. Journey times will also be reduced by 18 per cent.

North Harrow station: During the closure of the Metropolitan line through the station, the opportunity was taken to carry out repairs to the platforms.

Keep up with the improvement plan and how it might affect you at tfl.gov.uk

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London Travelwatch
London's transport watchdog
call 020 3176 2999, or visit
www.londontravelwatch.org.uk

*Service and network charges apply.
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Take your newspaper with you or put it in a recycling bin.