

Crime doesn't pay

A convicted vandal is paying for his crime in more ways than one thanks to London Underground's first successful civil action to recover the cost of graffiti damage.

Daniel Salim Koroma, 28, from Stoke Newington, was taken to the Small Claims Court following his conviction for graffiti. He must now pay London Underground £3,000 – the cost of repairing the damage he caused – under a County Court Judgment.

John Strutton, Crime and Disorder Partnership Unit Manager, said: "We've arranged for Koroma to pay back £50 a month over five years. Unless they are fully paid within a month of being issued, County Court Judgments remain on a person's credit file for six years. Even if Koroma keeps up the payments, it's likely to affect his ability to get any kind of credit.

"We started to find that criminal convictions alone weren't enough to deter these people, so this is another way we can punish them, this time in their pockets.

"The second civil action is going through now and we are sure there will be many more."



Police Community Support Officer Clive Ling reassures customers at Victoria.

Support from the community

Security on the Underground is getting a boost with the recruitment of the first British Transport Police Community Support Officers (PCSOs).

Twenty of the officers are being funded by Transport for London and will be deployed across the network.

British Transport Police Inspector Jeff Boothe said: "PCSOs on the rail network have more than 60 powers at their disposal.

"They will be able to enforce byelaws, issue fixed penalty notices and even detain suspects.

"London Underground's first eight officers formed part of reassurance teams, with responsibility for specific groups of stations.

"We want them to be visible, accessible and familiar to staff and the general public."

Station Supervisor Peter Fernandez welcomed the idea of PCSOs on the Underground. He said: "I think any kind of uniformed presence on the tube will deter would-be criminals.

"At Victoria, we hope to see a decrease in the number of pickpockets and drunks operating on the station."

A new
name for
Pension Fund

The LRT Pension Fund changed its name to the TfL Pension Fund on 1 April 2005.

You don't need to do anything, but you will see the new name on any correspondence from the fund. A newsletter, *Pensionews*, highlighting this and other pension changes was recently sent to you.

Please note that the website address has also changed and is now www.tflpensionfund.co.uk



PENSIONERS' FORUM UPDATE

MAIN POINTS OF MEETING HELD ON 3 FEBRUARY 2005

- The pensioners' representatives reviewed issue 6 of the pensioners' edition of *otm*. They again expressed a view that there should be a better balance between human stories and transport issues, as the balance had now swung too far in favour of human stories. Discussion also took place about the editorial independence of *otm*
- The pensioners' representatives asked management to pursue the funding of a LTPA Newsheet to be distributed to all pensioners
- The pensioners' representatives reviewed progress made by the working group set up to examine whether the Pensioner Liaison Scheme was giving the best possible value for money.

Representatives on the Pensioners' Forum were introduced to Gerry Duffy, who has taken over the role as chair of the forum.

Gerry is Employee Relations Director for London Underground and has a wealth of experience of pensioner issues. As forum chair, he'll be looking out for the interests of all TfL or LT pensioners, not just people who worked for London Underground.

He said: "I see my role as a conduit between the pensioners' representatives and TfL. I'm there to listen to pensioners' concerns, look at how the company

can act on them quickly and to see how we can improve communication with pensioners.

"We already have a leading edge service for pensioners, with an active network of Pensioner Liaison Representatives and committees such as the Pensioners' Forum – we already do more for our pensioners than many companies. I'll be looking at how the company can be even more helpful and involve pensioners more."

Gerry joined London Underground in 2004. He has previously been Vice-President/Director in Human



Gerry Duffy.

Resources and held Employee Relations positions with household name companies in the US, Europe and the UK. Born in Glasgow, he has an honours degree in business, attended courses at Harvard and Babson in the US and is a Fellow of both the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development and Institute of Directors.



Continuing to clamp down on fare dodgers

Catching fare evaders remains a high priority for Transport for London (TfL).

The Oyster database and frequent interchange checks are combating the problem of tube fare evasion. Terry Allan, Revenue Control Manager for the Bakerloo, Central and Victoria lines, said: "We check when passengers are least expecting it."

Joint exercises with the British Transport Police in crime hotspots have also proved beneficial, said Terry: "We're finding that there are links between fare evasion and street crime, so we've been concentrating on areas where both are high – such as Harlesden and Seven Sisters."

Daly Antwi-Safee, Revenue Control Manager for the Jubilee, Northern and Piccadilly lines, said: "High-visibility revenue protection – carried out by uniformed staff on trains and at

interchanges – is the order of the day on my patch."

Jeff Tucker, Head of Bus Enforcement, said most bus passengers – 98 per cent – have the correct fare for the journey, but a "hardcore of opportunistic individuals" persistently travel without tickets.

There have been focused activities on London's 'bendy' buses because tickets are purchased before the journey instead of on the bus. The number of revenue inspectors has been increased on these services, resulting in a 50 per cent drop in fare evaders in the last 12 months.

Jeff said 10,000 people were successfully prosecuted in the last year for fare evasion on buses: "We need to stay ahead of the game and will continue to increase the number of inspectors."

Your contacts at your magazine

Do you have something you'd like to include in the next pensioner edition of *otm*? Let us know! Please remember to include a telephone number with your letter.

Your contacts

At London Underground

Dee Horsman
tel 020 7918 3388
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email
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Employee Communications,
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London SW1H 0BD

Or you can contact the team at

AB Publishing
tel 020 7922 5678
fax 020 7922 5679
AB Publishing Limited,
24-26 Great Suffolk Street,
London SE1 0UE
email
onthemove@abcomm.co.uk

Forthcoming events

Come together

Calling all LTSA members: the LTSA annual reunion will be a garden party on Wednesday 13 July.

The reunion – at 48 Eastleigh Avenue, South Harrow, Middlesex HA2 0UG – starts at 1pm and goes on until late. There is a nominal fee of £6.

For maps and further information, contact Donald Castle, LTSA chairman, on 020 8248 1442.

Tales from the Bakerloo line

Do you have a tale to tell about the Bakerloo line?

The line will celebrate its centenary in March 2006, so the team is on the look-out for anecdotes and photos to use in displays at stations.

Dylan Glenister, Customer Service Assistant at Edgware Road, said: "We'd like to hear from anyone who worked on the line over the years, and also Train Operators who can tell us how it has changed.

"We've got plenty of material about the history of the line, but it's the people side we'd like to hear about."

Contact Dylan with your stories on 020 7918 1579 or email dylan.glenister@tube.tfl.gov.uk

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Heathrow work on schedule



Customer Service Assistant Gurpreet Gill is among the many staff helping customers get to their destinations now Heathrow Terminal 4 station is closed.

The work at Heathrow Terminal 4 Underground station is going ahead on schedule, to allow a huge junction box to be built in preparation for the Piccadilly line extension to the new Terminal 5 in 2008.

The station closed for 20 months in January, with a replacement bus service running from Hatton Cross.

Station Supervisor Baber Mirza said: "The first weekend passed without incident, and we're very pleased with the response of customers and staff. The weeks of bombarding customers with information obviously paid off as most London residents knew about the closures and allowed plenty of time for their journeys. Some foreign customers were a little confused, but we had multilingual staff on duty to deal with their queries."

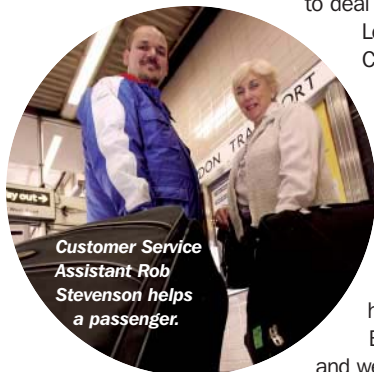
Leaflets detailing the changes are now available at stations. Customers should allow extra time for journeys to Terminal 4:

- an extra 15 minutes if using the bus from Hatton Cross
- an extra 30 minutes if needing step-free access via Heathrow Terminal 123 and changing onto the Heathrow Express.

No extra time should be required for reaching Terminals 1, 2 or 3.

Staff from Terminal 4 have moved to Hatton Cross for the duration of the closure and porters have been contracted in to help customers joining the bus service with their luggage.

Baber said: "The porters and additional staff have settled in well and we're hoping the rest of the closure will run just as smoothly."



Customer Service Assistant Rob Stevenson helps a passenger.



New ticket hall for King's Cross

The official go-ahead has just been announced for the new Northern ticket hall at King's Cross St Pancras.

It's part of the work to transform the station and increase capacity ready for the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link at St Pancras. It will also improve King's Cross for regular passengers by reducing crowd congestion.

Steve Bradshaw, Station Assistant Multi-Functional, said: "Compared to what it's like now, this sounds a lot better. We get jam-packed with 150 customers in the ticket hall at times and, with the new rail links, volumes are going to go up.

"We need to see the plans and really

understand what is going to be built, but we're looking forward to it."

Tim O'Toole said: "When complete, this new hall and the connections to tube and rail platforms will make King's Cross fully accessible for the first time, by providing lifts to serve the deep-level platforms.

"This announcement means that the new King's Cross St Pancras tube and rail stations will be complete in time for the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics should London's bid be successful. It also means the new station will be able to cope with the extra passenger traffic from the new Channel Tunnel Rail Link and high-speed commuter services to St Pancras."

Olympic specials

Delegates from the International Olympic Committee (IOC) were issued with a specially designed London 2012 Oyster card valid for their recent visit to the capital.

The Oyster cards were loaded with a seven-day, all zone Travelcard, with a folded map attached. The Oyster card featured the London 2012 logo.

The IOC party was in town for four days to look at proposals for the London 2012 bid, including transport links. During February and March, the delegates visited all of the candidate cities and we now have to wait until 6 July to hear which city has been successful in its bid to host the 2012 Olympics and Paralympics.



Bus garage of the year

Transport for London board member Paul Moore recently presented the winning £5,000 cheque to the staff at Sutton bus garage (operated by London General) for winning London bus garage of the year.

Paul also presented £2,500 to the staff from Bromley, operated by Stagecoach, which finished runner-up.

TfL offers these special prizes to garages that have offered the best quality service to the travelling public.

Sutton's winnings will be spent on new drinks machines for staff and better locker facilities for drivers.



Paul Moore (fourth from left) presents the cheque to Sutton staff.

Rejuvenating transport in London

London's transport system has suffered from decades of under-investment, but help is at hand. Transport for London (TfL) is set to spend £10 billion in the next five years on improving and maintaining the capital's rail, tube and bus services and roads.

"A groundbreaking settlement with the government has provided a once in a generation opportunity for London to reverse this decline. This new investment programme allows TfL to build on its record and plan a comprehensive approach to the whole of London's transport infrastructure," said Transport Commissioner Bob Kiley.

There are numerous projects under way which demonstrate TfL's determination.

Rail services

Rail services are a key area for investment. There are, for instance, extensive improvements scheduled for the East London line.

It is set to be extended north to Dalston Junction and south to West Croydon and Crystal Palace (see map, right). Due to open by 2010, it will be ready to support the 2012 Olympics should Britain's bid succeed.

The Croyley link – an extension of the Metropolitan line to Watford Junction – is set to benefit commuters by 2010.

Train, track and signal upgrades will improve tube reliability and enable an extra two million train miles to be run each year by 2009/2010. Station modernisation and refurbishments are due to take place at 200 stations by 2010.

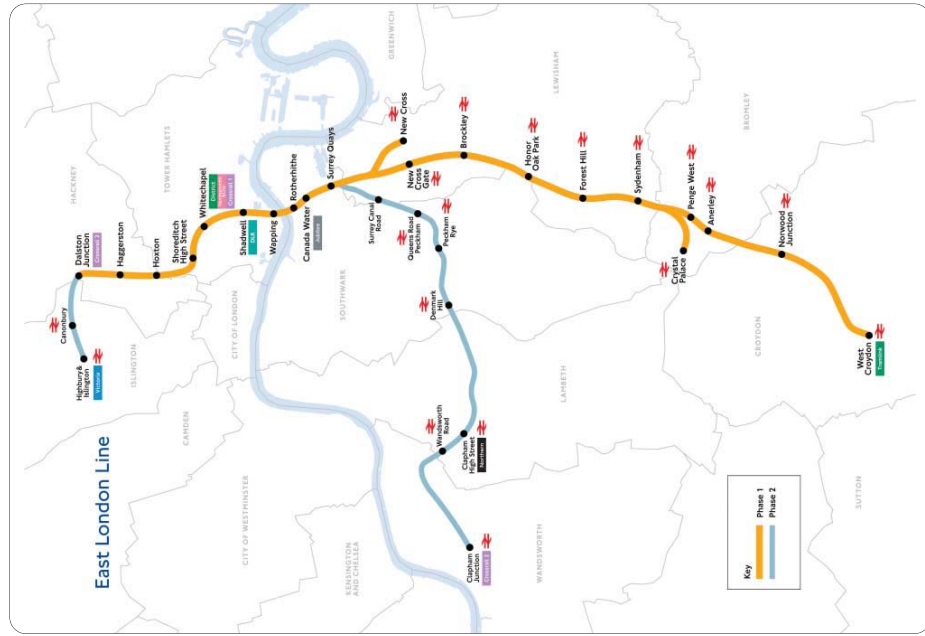
Accessibility improvements, such as provision of audio/visual information and tactile guidance, will be made. One quarter of Underground stations will be step-free from street to platform by 2010, improving accessibility.

Wembley Park is being developed into a showpiece station, built in tandem with the new National Stadium that opens in 2006, which will allow 37,000 customers an hour to pass through it.

Major works to relieve congestion at Underground stations will take place at Covent Garden and Holloway Road by 2007, King's Cross by 2008 and Vauxhall by 2010.



Times are a-changing: Customer Service Assistant John Osborne shows a customer a new indicator board at Kilburn.



Roads

The proposed Thames Gateway bridge will be the first new London road bridge to span the Thames for more than 70 years. Construction of the bridge, which will link Beckton to Thamesmead with dedicated lanes for public transport, pedestrians and cyclists, is scheduled to start in 2009, with the bridge being completed by 2012.

In Bexley, a project to widen 1.8km of the A206 – the Thames Road – is due to be completed in 2007.

Safety enhancements will continue on TfL's road network, including £149 million of safety improvements to the Blackwall, Rotherhithe and Fore Street tunnels, Westminster Bridge and replacement bridges on the A406 and A40.



The future

The investment programme also looks to the future, allowing projects that are currently on the drawing board to be taken forward.

Designs under consideration include West London Tram, a 12.5-mile route of approximately 40 stops linking Shepherd's Bush to Uxbridge; a Croydon Tramlink extension to Crystal Palace; a DLR extension to Barking Reach; the Cross River Tram scheme – a proposal linking Brixton and Peckham with Camden and King's Cross via central London; and extension of East London Transit from Barking to Gaileons Reach.

TfL's investment programme demands that current service levels are supported, a good state of repair is achieved, demand growth is met, London's growth is accommodated and quality of service is enhanced.

Extra money from the PPP, public finance initiatives (PFIs) and the government will help to make these vital changes to the capital's transport infrastructure.

"London is a growing, vibrant city," concluded Bob Kiley.

"Our challenge today is not to build a new transport system, but to upgrade and energise an older system which no longer satisfies the needs of a modern city. Through this investment programme we will ensure that London's transport can manage the demands of today and meet the needs of tomorrow."

Buses

A 100 per cent accessible bus fleet is due to be in service by the end of 2005 and all buses will be fitted with CCTV.

A new bus radio, vehicle location and countdown system – to be introduced in 2008 – will assist bus reliability and give better real-time information to bus users. Seven thousand illuminated bus stops will also be introduced.

A new bus station at Hounslow, to be completed by 2008, will make waiting for services and changing to other transport modes more comfortable, accessible and convenient. A new bus station will also be built at Dalston to provide a convenient interchange with the East London line extension. New bus garages at Hounslow and North Acton – due to be completed in 2006 – will provide capacity for extra buses.



Other transport

New Docklands Light Railway (DLR) links will play a vital role in regeneration and support for the 2012 Olympics. The DLR London City Airport link is due to open this year, with an extension to Woolwich expected to open early in 2009. An extension from Canning Town to Stratford International is also due to open in 2009.

A new three-car DLR service on the Bank-Lewisham route is due to be in service by 2009, designed to add 50 per cent more capacity to support the growth of the Docklands.

Local travel environment improvements will be made to town centres and walking and cycling improvements totalling £160 million will be made to TfL and borough roads. The London Cycle Network Plus will be completed by 2010. A London-wide low emission zone to restrict emissions from lorries, buses, coaches and taxis is planned for 2007.

Meanwhile, Cross London Rail Links (Crossrail) is a £154 million project tasked with developing two new routes through London: Crossrail line 1 (west to east), and Crossrail line 2 (north east to south west).



noticeboard

- Counsel and Care has launched two guides for people considering a care home. *The Complete Care Home Guide* aims to answer the most commonly asked questions and *The Brief Care Home Guide* covers the same subject in less detail. Both guides are available free from Counsel and Care. Call 020 7241 8555 or email advice@counselandcare.org.uk
- **The Environment Agency has launched its annual flood awareness campaign, which this year is targeted at older people. *Flooding: Be Prepared, a Guide for Older People* is available from the Environment Agency by calling 0845 988 1188.**
- The Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion has published *The Disability and Carers' Handbook*, a guide to benefits,

Welfare to Work support and protection in the workplace for carers and disabled people. The guide is £14.95 from the Centre for Economic and Social Inclusion. Call 020 7582 7221.

- **Alcohol Concern has released a booklet on safer drinking for older people. *I don't mind if I do . . . Alcohol and Older People – Safer Drinking for the Over 60s* is available from Alcohol Concern, single copies free, additional copies 50p each. Call 020 7922 8667, or visit www.alcoholconcern.org.uk**
- The government has published its latest plan to reduce fuel poverty among vulnerable groups by 2010, including an increase in the money allocated to the Energy Efficiency Commitment. *Fuel Poverty in England: The Government's Plan for Action* is available free from Defra Publications. Call 0845 955 6000.

- **Age Concern has joined up with Energywatch, the independent watchdog for gas and electricity consumers, the Pension Service and the Disabled Living Foundation to launch a campaign raising awareness of the Priority Services Register (PSR). The register is free for people of pensionable age and offers benefits such as the provision of a password to protect against bogus callers and help if gas supplies are disrupted. A leaflet explains the options and benefits available. *Free Services for Gas and Electricity Customers across the UK – Your Guide to the Free Services Available and Who Is Eligible to Claim Them* is available by calling 0845 906 0708 or 020 7799 8340 or visit: www.energywatch.org.uk/uploads/Free_Services_Leaflet.pdf**

Obituaries and in memoriam

If you have an obituary notice for inclusion, please send details to *otm* pensioner edition, 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or email onthemove@abcomm.co.uk. Please include a contact telephone number in case we need to clarify any information.

- **Raschid (Roy) Abdullah** died on 27 October 2004. He worked as a Conductor for 16 years at Potters Bar garage and then as Garage Assistant until his retirement in 1986.
- **Robin Allen-Smith** died on 23 January 2005 after a long illness. He worked for London Transport for 40 years in the press office. In later years he also worked for the Friends of London's Transport Museum, giving visitors free individual guided tours.
- **Alan Armstrong** died on 30 December 2003, aged 79. Alan joined LT as an Apprentice Coachmaker and worked at various garages before his retirement in 1988.
- **Len (Tommy) Atkins** died on 1 January 2005, aged 93. He worked as a Conductor and Driver at Muswell Hill and Holloway and then in the Supplies Department at Chiswick and 55 Broadway. He retired in March 1976 after 48 years' service.
- **Terry Butler** died on 27 February 2005, aged 65. He was a Motorman at Baker Street and worked for LT for 35 years.
- **Cyril James Case** died on 2 July 1994, aged 84. He joined LT in 1925 and worked at West Ham and Chiswick garages.
- **Richard Frederick Curtis** died on 1 September 2004, aged 88. He worked for LT for 32 years as a Station Foreman.

- **Harold Lee Darling** passed away on 18 December 2004. He was a Conductor, Driver, Inspector and Chief Instructor at bus depots around London.
- **Dave Flint** passed away on 4 March 1999, aged 54. He worked as a Bus Mechanic at New Cross and Camberwell garages.
- **Albert William Hoste** passed away on 17 February 2005 after a long illness. He joined LT Builders in 1963 and served for 22 years, before leaving in 1985.
- **Graham Jenkins**, from the Chief Civil Engineer's Department, passed away on 6 February 2005.
- **Frederick (Chuck) King** died on 5 January 2004. He worked for 40 years in the Electrical Department at Earl's Court. **Frederick King (Jnr)** died on 7 March 2003. He worked as a Cleaner for nearly 36 years at New Cross.
- **Harold Kingswell** died on 21 February 2005, aged 84. He was a Motorman at Watford and Queen's Park depots.
- **James Lawrence** passed away on 6 January 2005, aged 95. He began his career at LT as a Tram and Bus Conductor before becoming Depot Inspector at the Finchley garage.
- **Philip (Pat) Mealy** died on 19 March 2004, aged 80. He joined LT as a Porter and later worked as a Guard and Driver on the Jubilee line.
- **David (Nick) Livingstone Niccolls** died on 2 December 2003, aged 71. He worked on LT buses for 32 years and was based at Wandsworth, Victoria and the Tour Division as a Conductor.
- **Bernard Nicols** died on 5 January 2005, aged 66. He worked for LT for 24 years as a Station Foreman.
- **Ernest Terence Orchard (Ted)** passed away in January 2004. He

was a Driver on the Piccadilly line.

- **Len Panter** died on 23 January 2005. He worked on LT buses for more than 17 years at South Croydon garage as a Driver.
- **Caversham Alfred Pearce**, former London Buses employee, died on 13 January 2005, at the age of 77.
- **John Pearce** passed away on 25 September 2004. He joined London Underground in 1968 as a Booking Clerk and subsequently worked as a Trainer.
- **John Perry** died on 22 May 2004. He worked as a Conductor and then Driver at Thornton Heath garage in the 1970s and 1980s.
- **Irene Scorey** passed away on 9 August 2004. She joined London Transport from school and worked there until her retirement in 1993.
- **Albert (Bert) Taylor** passed away in September 2004. He was a Structural Engineer with London Transport.
- **Don Tinch** died on 11 January 2005, aged 70. He worked as a Driver for 35 years at Hammersmith and Shepherd's Bush garages.
- **John Trower** passed away, aged 70, in April 2004. He worked for LT for 25 years as a Driver and Inspector.
- **Herbert Alfred (Bert) Turrell** died on 17 December 2004, aged 93. He worked for London Buses for 36 years, retiring in 1976.
- **Alfred (Alfie) Vincent** passed away on 28 November 2004, aged 73. He drove open top buses for the Clapham Transport Museum before finishing his career at Merton garage, where he had started in 1947 as a Bus Mechanic.
- **Norman Charles Wood** passed away on 6 November 2000. He worked at Chiswick engineering works for more than 36 years.



If you have a letter to the Editor, send your contribution to *otm* pensioner letters, 24-26 Great Suffolk Street, London SE1 0UE, or email onthemove@abcomm.co.uk. Please remember to include your name and a contact telephone number – we won't publish your number but we may need to follow up information with you.

Drivers on board?

Dear Editor,

As a pensioner who uses the buses a lot, I must complain about the bus drivers not lowering the buses for us older people, especially if they stop away from the kerb.

I know bus drivers are supposed to pull up to the kerb at bus stops. This is not always possible because of parked cars. Even when the driver sees us struggling to get up the step to get on the bus, they don't lower the step. The same when we get off.

I pulled my arthritic knee getting on a bus and it took a month before it got better completely.

I do not walk with a stick, but that does not mean I can get up high steps easily.

I know this letter will not change things – at least I have brought this to your attention.

Mary Wyatt
Edgware

Don't we matter any more?

Dear Editor,

I and other pensioners object to the way we have been pushed to one side, not only by you, but also by the Pension Fund.

When I left London Transport 15 years ago, we received a regular issue of *LT News*. Then the buses were privatised, which meant excluding long-serving bus workers from the Fund. The *LT News* was scrapped and replaced by *otm*.

Of course, it was then decided to privatise the Underground. This meant less money available for the Fund and instead of a monthly issue of *otm*, a special pensioners' edition. This means we no longer get notice of the flexible AGM unless we are prepared to pay £6 and we think this is an affront to all pensioners. All we get now is a delayed report on the flexible AGM from which we are in effect barred.

As for the Fund itself, we no longer get a monthly statement, presumably to save money which privatisation has bled the Fund of.

We are very unhappy at the way we have been pushed aside. The odd issue of a pensioners' edition of *otm* is no consolation and we are expecting that to cease eventually.

We have watched this over the years and the future looks ominous. It is so sad.

Albert Martin
former employee North Street Garage

Dear Albert,

Thank you for taking the time to share your views.

First, we appreciate that the timing of the publication last autumn meant that we could not include advance notice of the Annual Members' Meeting. This year, we plan to include a piece explaining what will take place at the event and how to attend in the next (July) edition.

The *otm* special pensioners' edition was launched in October 2003. It was developed in response to feedback from pensioner representatives that a quarterly section of pensioner news in the regular *otm* was not enough to meet their needs. The new format has doubled the number of pages pensioners receive each quarter, means they no longer have to pay a subscription and allows us to include more specific pensioner news and issues, as well as the best and most relevant articles from the main staff version of *otm*. Pensioners don't miss out.

Following a review of the services provided to all its members, the Trustees of the LRT Pension Fund decided that the move to a single annual payslip was a cost-effective exercise, especially as the cost of providing good final salary pensions is increasing rapidly. The annual payslip was designed to ensure that the level of information provided to you was the same as before, and it also lets you know in advance how much you will receive and when, making it unnecessary to issue a payslip every four weeks. However, additional payslips are sent if your net pension changes during the year by more than £5 in any pay period because of changes to tax codes etc.

We're sorry if the changes have made you and other pensioners feel left out – that was far from the intention.

Andrew Jones Head of Communications
Kim Robertson Pension Fund Communications
Team Leader

Phone charge clarification

Dear readers,

I wish to clarify the situation with the new telephone numbers for HR Services, Pensioner Liaison and Staff Travel.

In the last issue of *otm*, it was reported that calls to the new numbers – which start with 0870 – would be charged at a local rate.

The Pensioners Forum has asked us to make clear that the rate at which users are charged for using the 0870 number will depend on their

phone service provider and we apologise for any confusion that may have arisen.

The new HR Services department, which includes the Pensioner Liaison Unit, is working well but now, after two months' operations, we have had the opportunity to review a number of things – including the ways people contact us. As part of that review, we have made a decision that a better option for pensioners and other external callers to HR Services would be for us to move to a

freefone 0800 number.

We will make this change as soon as practicably possible, and we will let you know when the new number is active. In the meantime, if you would prefer not to phone, you can write to HR Services at: HR Services, Transport For London, PO Box 50631, Empress State Building, London SW6 1YJ.

Hugh Hood Director of
Group Human Resources

Gordon Dixon (*Pensioners' Forum representative*) writes:

I am grateful for the response by HR Services to the representations I made on behalf of pensioners who had realised that their calls to the Pensioner Liaison Manager were being charged at rates of up to 10 pence a minute. Until the free telephone number is available, pensioners wishing to avoid paying this rate can call Transport for London (020 7222 5600) and ask for Pensioner Liaison or Staff Travel.

Lost and foundling

A photo of West Hampstead station in the 1930s, which featured in October's pensioner issue of *otm*, was particularly poignant for one reader.

Chris Townsend contacted *otm* to tell us about his friend Doug West, who was a foundling baby discovered at West Hampstead station in January 1936. *otm* spoke to Doug to find out more.

"I've been told I was about six weeks old when I was found," said Doug. "I was found by a police officer and given the surname West after the station.

"I was in an orphanage until I was 15.

I did try to trace my family when I turned 18, but in those days the records were kept under lock and key, and no one knew anything. It was a different world back then.

"I don't know where I was found at the station or anything about the day, such as whether any station staff were involved – if anyone knows anything I'd love to hear from them."

If you can shed any light on Doug's quest for information, please contact the *otm* team at onthemove@abcomm.co.uk or 020 7922 5678.



Terry Owen (centre) with a cadet talking to the ISS, surrounded by radio and antenna tracking equipment.

Space chats

London Underground pensioner Terry Owen has helped youngsters make contact with astronauts orbiting the earth.

The children from 1132 Squadron Air Training Corps in Stalham, Norfolk, had a list of questions for the astronauts in the International Space Station Alpha/Zarya, 160 miles above us, and travelling at 17,500 mph.

"There was a lot of form-filling involved, but it was very rewarding and a great experience for the children," said Terry, who is Radio Officer for the Squadron. "Permission is only given for a few of these chats and we gave careful thought to the questions the children were going to ask.

"We submitted the 20 questions in advance, such as how the astronauts celebrated New Year's Eve and what they watch for entertainment – apparently *The Office* is a big favourite."

Terry joined London Transport in 1966 as a guard, becoming a driver on the Northern line at High Barnet depot, then Relief Station Inspector in the 1970s on the Northern/Victoria line, before spending a few years in Finchley Central and Amersham until he retired in 1994.

"It was good to help give the air cadets a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to talk by amateur radio links to Commander Leroy Chiao and Flight Engineer Salizhan Sharipov aboard the International Space Station," said Terry.

"Only five schools in Britain have been given this chance before and we're the first air cadets."

Great getaways for less

To help you discover the beauty of Thailand, Thai Airways and Royal Orchid Holidays have put together a fantastic range of packages for retired employees.

The packages include Gulf of Thailand, a 13-day trip that starts at £650 per person; Relax on the Sunrise Coast, 13 days at £710 per person; and Bangkok – Chiang Mai – Phuket, 13 days at £859 per person. All packages include flights, breakfast, transfers and accommodation. The packages listed here are for travel between 1 May and 30 June 2005, but Silverbird Travel is happy to provide discount-rate quotes for other dates.



For more information, quotes for other dates and to book, please call Silverbird Travel on **020 8875 9191** and state that you are calling regarding the **TfL promotion** or visit www.thaiairways.co.uk/tflpromotion

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Prices range from £289 to £535 per person depending on date and holiday insurance is also available.

For further details or to book, just telephone Travelsmith Ltd (ABTA V1290/ATOL 1917) on **01621 784666** or **0870 748 1000**, quoting reference **C173/LT**. You can also visit the website www.travelsmith.co.uk and click on corfu.



Plaque plea answered

Bob Cunningham has written to thank readers for their help in the search for a missing memorial plaque connected to his family.

Bob's search for the plaque was featured in the October 2004 pensioner issue of *otm*.

He said: "May I send my sincere thanks to the people who wrote to tell of their experiences during the last war. I am most grateful for the information on the whereabouts of the memorial stone, which has been seen at Acton works. I have tried for so long to obtain this information."