

*“Leaving, on a ghost train: or,
where technology meets
trainspotting and direct
action.”*

Paul Jennings, University of Winchester
(paul.jennings@winchester.ac.uk)

&

Caroline Wilson, Anura Consulting Ltd
(clw1@anuraconsulting.eu)

We are going to tell you a story
about....



Image: © 2011 [APM Alex](#), available under a [Creative Commons Attribution 2.0 Generic license](#).

...well, really one of these...



Image: © 2009 [Matt Buck](#), available under a [Creative Commons Attribution-Share Alike 2.0 Generic license](#).

...and there are ghost hunters...



Image: © 2012 Caroline Wilson

The Story

It is 10.00 am, and I want to get
a train from here to
Wandsworth Road



Ghost train, where are you?

Operator		SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN
Facilities		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Notes															
Birmingham New Street	12 d		05 29b	06 10f				06 50f			08 10b	09 10b	10 10b	11 10b	12 10b
Northampton	d	04 48b	05 45b	06 38f				07 39f			08 47f	09 50f	10 50f	11 50f	12 50f
Milton Keynes Central	d	05 04b	06 23b	07 01				08 13			09 13	10 13	11 13	12 13	13 13
Bletchley	d	05 09b	06 07b	07 05				08 17			09 17	10 17	11 17	12 17	13 17
Leighton Buzzard	d	05 15b	06 14b	07 13				08 24			09 24	10 24	11 24	12 24	13 24
Tring	d	05 29b	06 24b	07 22				08 34			09 34	10 34	11 34	12 34	13 34
Berkhamsted	d	05 34b	06 28b	07 26				08 39			09 39	10 39	11 39	12 39	13 39
Hemel Hempstead	d	05 38b	06 33b	07 31				08 43			09 43	10 43	11 43	12 43	13 43
Watford Junction	d	05 54	06 53	07 38				08 51			09 51	10 51	11 51	12 51	13 51
Harrow & Wealdstone	Z5 d	06 00	06 59	07 45				08 58			09 58	10 59	11 59	12 59	13 59
Wembley Central	Z4 d	06 05	07 04	07 49				09 05			10 05	11 04	12 04	13 04	14 04
Shepherd's Bush	Z2 d	06 19	07 19	08 04	08 31	09 06	09 18	09 33			10 21	11 19	12 19	13 19	14 19
Kensington (Olympia)	Z2 d	06 22	07 22	08 07	08 33	09 09	09 21	09 35	10 02		10 24	11 21	12 22	13 22	14 22
West Brompton	Z2 d	06 25	07 25	08 10	08 36	09 12	09 23	09 37	10 04		10 27	11 23	12 25	13 25	14 25
Imperial Wharf	Z2 d	06 27	07 27	08 13	08 38	09 15	09 26	09 40	10 07		10 29	11 26	12 27	13 28	14 28
Clapham Junction	Z2 10 a	06 32	07 32	08 17	08 43	09 19	09 31	09 45			10 34	11 30	12 32	13 32	14 32
Wandsworth Common	Z3 a	06 41c	07 41c	08 39	08 54c	09 30c	09 37	09 54c			10 37	11 37	12 37	13 37	14 37
Wandsworth Road	Z2 a								10 20						
Balham	Z3 a	06 44c	07 44c	08 42	08 56c	09 29c	09 41	09 56c			10 40	11 40	12 40	13 40	14 40
Streatham Common	Z3 a	06 48c	07 48c	08 46	09 00c	09 39c	09 45	10 00c			10 45	11 45	12 45	13 45	14 45
Norbury	Z3 a	06 50c	07 50c	08 48	09 03c	09 42c	09 48	10 03c			10 48	11 48	12 48	13 48	14 48
Thornton Heath	Z4 a	06 53c	07 53c	08 51	09 06c	09 45c	09 51	10 06c			10 51	11 51	12 51	13 51	14 51
Selhurst	Z4 a	06 56c	07 56c	08 54	09 08c	09 47c	09 53	10 08c			10 53	11 53	12 53	13 53	14 53
East Croydon	Z5 a	06 48c	07 51c	09 04	09 03c	09 39c	09 57	10 02c			10 57	11 57	12 57	13 57	14 57
South Croydon	Z5 a	07 06e	08 06e	08 47c	09 15c		10 01	10 15c			11 01	12 01	13 01	14 01	15 01
Gatwick Airport	+ a	07 10e	08 18c	08 49c	09 18c		10 08c	10 18c			11 18c	12 08c	13 08c	14 08c	15 08c
Brighton	10 a	07 44e	09 05e	09 41c	09 52e		10 28c	10 52e			11 28c	12 28c	13 28c	14 28c	15 28c

Ghost train, where are you? (route is on some timetables)

Operator		SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN	SN
Facilities		1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
Notes															
Birmingham New Street	12 d		05 29b 06 10f					06 50f			08 10b 09 10b 10 10b 11 10b 12 10b 13 10b 14 10b				
Northampton	d	04 48b 05 45b 06 38f						07 39f			08 47f 09 50f 10 50f 11 50f 12 50f 13 50f 14 50f				
Milton Keynes Central	d	05 04b 06 23b 07 01						08 13			09 13 10 13 11 13 12 13 13 13 14 13 15 13				
Bletchley	d	05 09b 06 07b 07 05						08 17			09 17 10 17 11 17 12 17 13 17 14 17 15 17				
Leighton Buzzard	d	05 15b 06 14b 07 13						08 24			09 24 10 24 11 24 12 24 13 24 14 24 15 24				
Tring	d	05 29b 06 24b 07 22						08 34			09 34 10 34 11 34 12 34 13 34 14 34 15 34				
Berkhamsted	d	05 34b 06 28b 07 26						08 39			09 39 10 39 11 39 12 39 13 39 14 39 15 39				
Hemel Hempstead	d	05 38b 06 33b 07 31						08 43			09 43 10 43 11 43 12 43 13 43 14 43 15 43				
Watford Junction	d	05 54 06 53 07 38						08 51			09 51 10 51 11 51 12 51 13 51 14 51 15 51				
Harrow & Wealdstone	Z5 d	06 00 06 59 07 45						08 58			09 58 10 59 11 59 12 59 13 59 14 59 15 59				
Wembley Central	Z4 d	06 05 07 04 07 49						09 05			10 05 11 04 12 04 13 04 14 04 15 04 16 05				
Shepherd's Bush	Z2 d	06 19 07 19 08 04 08 31 09 06 09 18 09 33									10 21 11 19 12 19 13 19 14 19 15 22 16 19				
Kensington (Olympia)	Z2 d	06 22 07 22 08 07 08 33 09 09 09 21 09 35							10 02		10 24 11 21 12 22 13 22 14 22 15 24 16 22				
West Brompton	Z2 d	06 25 07 25 08 10 08 36 09 12 09 23 09 37							10 04		10 27 11 23 12 25 13 25 14 25 15 26 16 25				
Imperial Wharf	Z2 d	06 27 07 27 08 13 08 38 09 15 09 26 09 40							10 07		10 29 11 26 12 27 13 28 14 28 15 29 16 27				
Clapham Junction	Z2 10 a	06 32 07 32 08 17 08 43 09 19 09 31 09 45									10 34 11 30 12 32 13 32 14 32 15 33 16 32				
Wandsworth Common	Z3 a	06 41c 07 41c 08 39 08 54c 09 30c 09 37 09 54c									10 37 11 37 12 37 13 37 14 37 15 37 16 37				
Wandsworth Road	Z2 a									10 20					
Balham	Z3 a	06 44c 07 44c 08 42 08 56c 09 29c 09 41 09 56c									10 40 11 40 12 40 13 40 14 40 15 40 16 40				
Streatham Common	Z3 a	06 48c 07 48c 08 46 09 00c 09 39c 09 45 10 00c									10 45 11 45 12 45 13 45 14 45 15 45 16 45				
Norbury	Z3 a	06 50c 07 50c 08 48 09 03c 09 42c 09 48 10 03c									10 48 11 48 12 48 13 48 14 48 15 48 16 48				
Thornton Heath	Z4 a	06 53c 07 53c 08 51 09 06c 09 45c 09 51 10 06c									10 51 11 51 12 51 13 51 14 51 15 51 16 51				
Selhurst	Z4 a	06 56c 07 56c 08 54 09 08c 09 47c 09 53 10 08c									10 53 11 53 12 53 13 53 14 53 15 53 16 54				
East Croydon	Z5 a	06 48c 07 51c 09 04 09 03c 09 39c 09 57 10 02c									10 57 11 57 12 57 13 57 14 57 15 57 16 58				
South Croydon	Z5 a	07 06e 08 06e 08 47c 09 15c						10 01 10 15c			11 01 12 01 13 01 14 01 15 01 16 01 17 02				
Gatwick Airport	+ a	07 10e 08 18c 08 49c 09 18c						10 08c 10 18c			11 18c 12 08c 13 08c 14 08c 15 08c 16 08c 17 08c				
Brighton	10 a	07 44e 09 05e 09 41c 09 52e						10 28c 10 52e			11 28c 12 28c 13 28c 14 28c 15 28c 16 28c 17 39c				

Oh, *there* you are... (but you effectively have to already know the time of the train to get this information online)

Train times & tickets

Edit journey / add return Passengers & railcards Print Save

Kensington Olympia [KPA] to Wandsworth Road [WWR]

with Travelcard From £7.00 with Oyster card From £1.40

Outward Mon 17 Sep

Buy cheapest for £1.90

Other cheap fares

Set up journey alerts

Earlier trains

Dep.	From	To	Arr.	Dur.	Chg.	Status
10:02	Kensington Olympia [KPA] Platform 3	Wandsworth Road [WWR]	10:20	18m	0	Details ✓

Single from £1.90

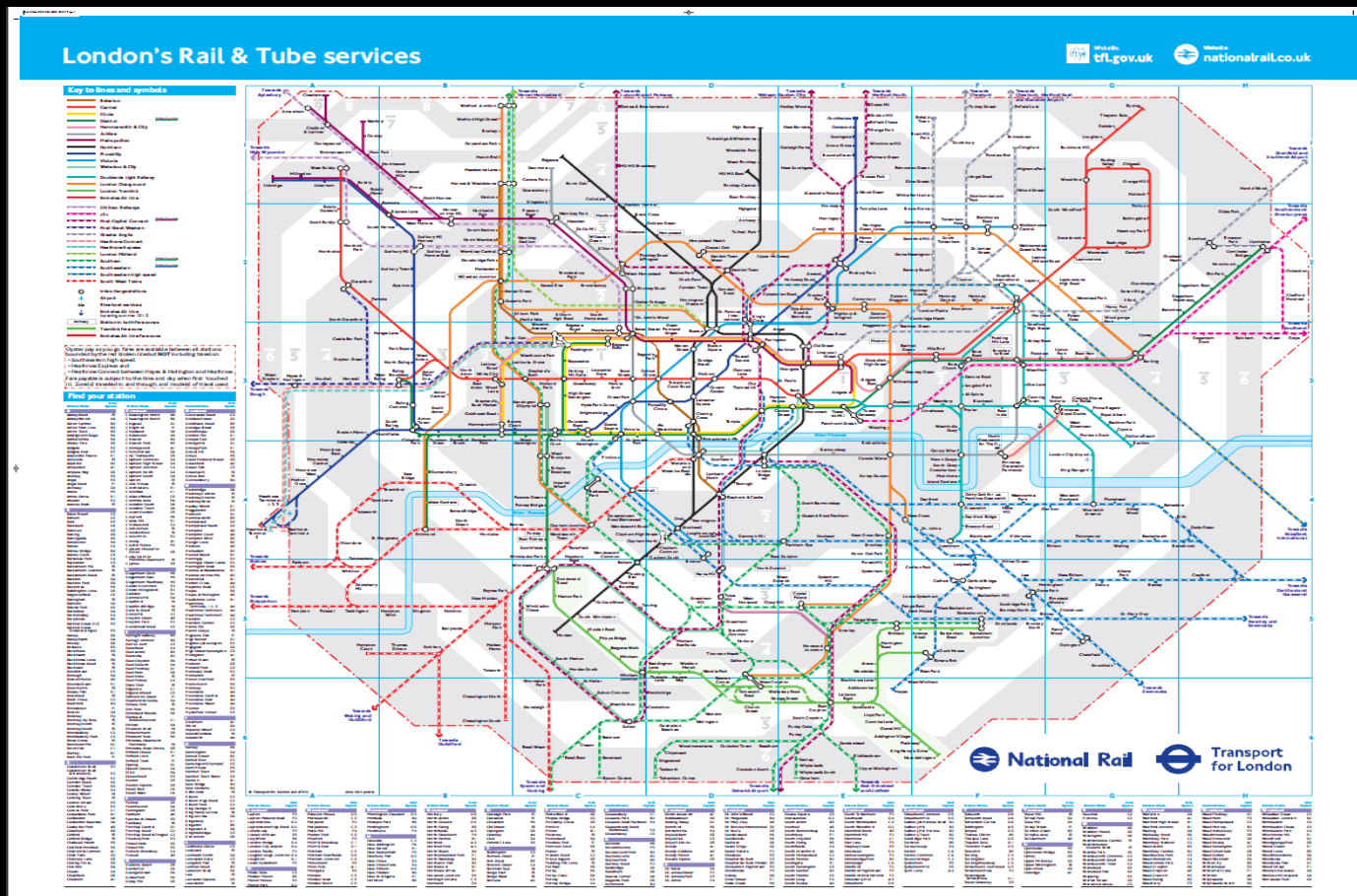
Based on 1 adult

CHEAPEST FARE

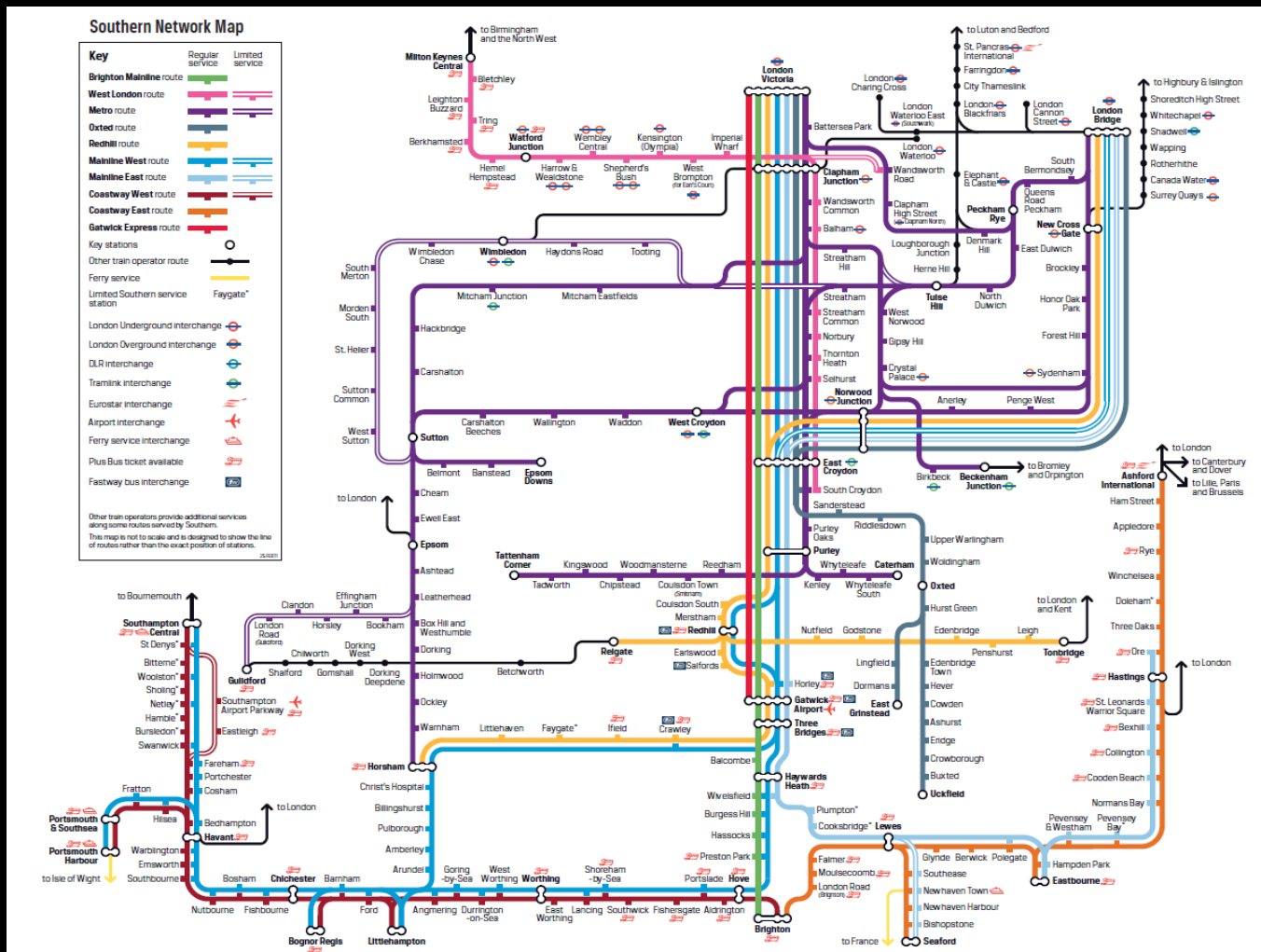
£1.90 Anytime More fares

Screenshot taken from www.nationalrail.co.uk

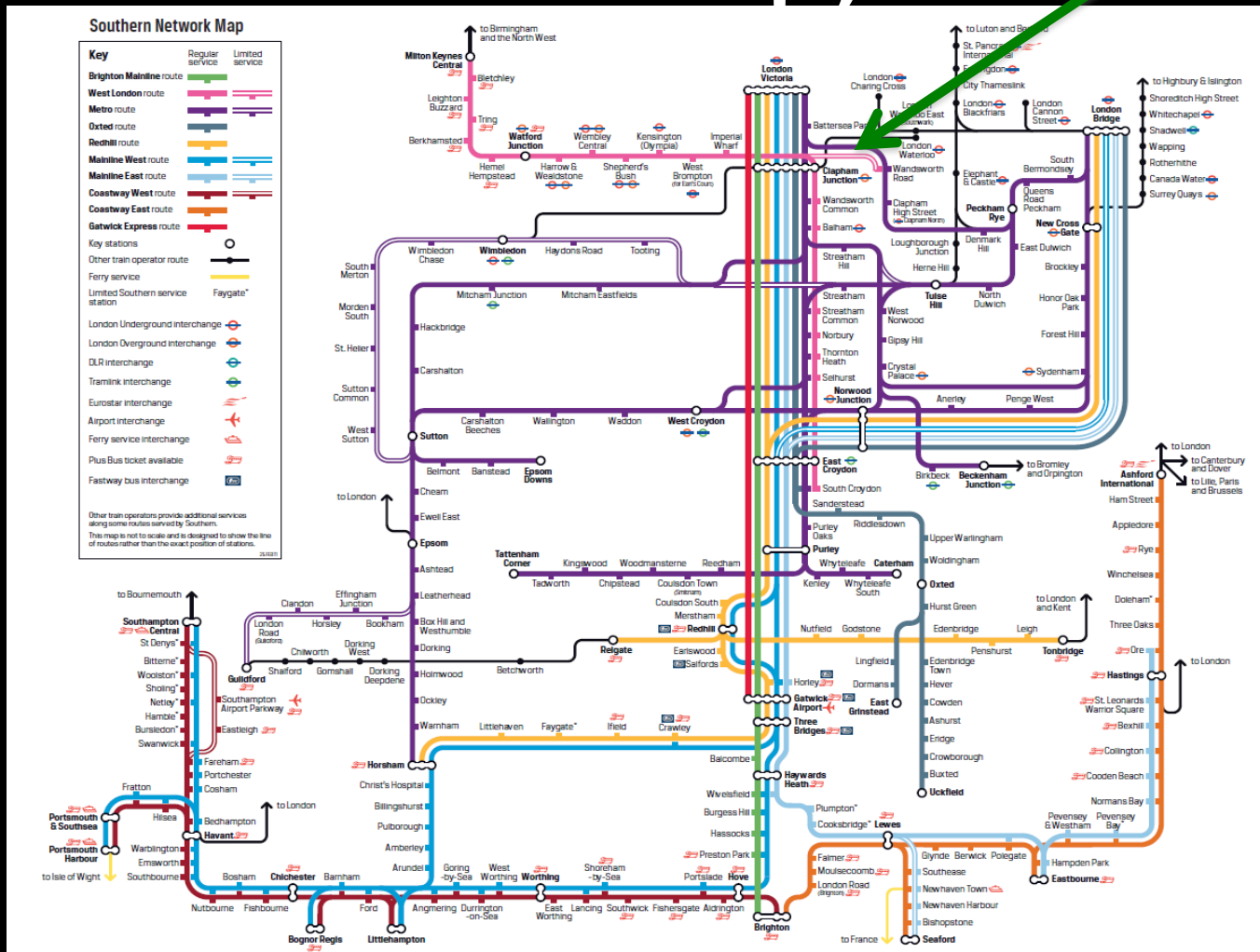
Ghost train, where are you (route is not on the 'comprehensive' map)?




Oh, *there* you are...



Oh, *there* you are... (but it is on this map)



Success!

Class				Ticket type		Adult		Child			
STD				ANYTIME DAY S		ONE		NIL		SGL	
				Start Date		Number					
				15 · SEP · 12		26852		48780984578			
From				Valid until				Price			
KENSNGTN OLYMPIA				15 · SEP · 12				£1.90X			
To				Route				Validity			
WANDSWORTH ROAD				ANY PERMITTED				ON DATE SHOWN			
				SINGLE							
				Printed 09:58 on 15 SEP 12							

Adjusted image of ticket issued

I catch my train, but am the only
passenger on this ghost train...



The explanation (and our
categorisation of ghost trains)

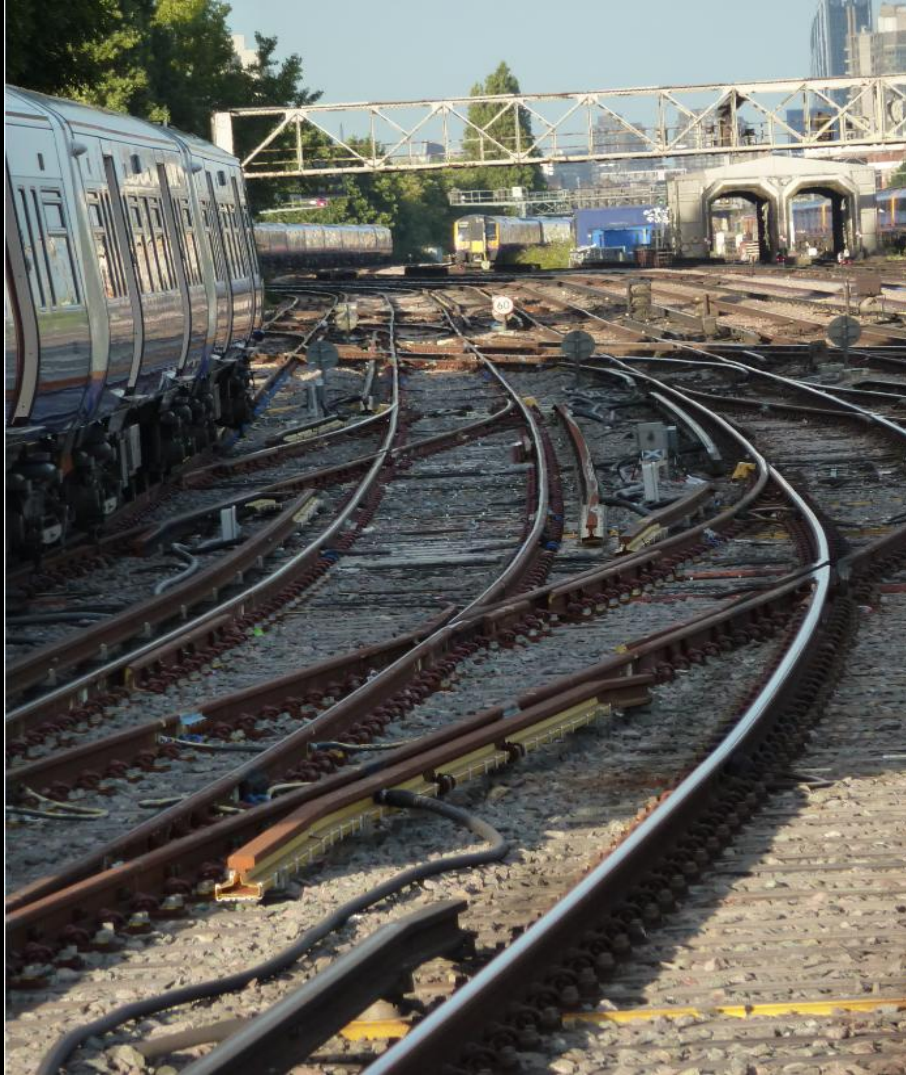
Parliamentary ghosts

Department for
Transport

Your rail franchise contract states that you must run a service from Station A to Station B

The most ‘traditional’ ghost train, a train service run due to franchise commitments

Actual ghosts



A train service run to keep a line open for the convenience of the train company (e.g. for use in diversions, training etc.)

Hungry ghosts

Department for
Transport

Withdrawal of Scheduled Passenger
Services between Wandsworth
Road, Kensington (Olympia) and
Ealing Broadway

Consultation Document

10 May 2012

A train service being run on
a route that is going through
a procedure (a long and
drawn-out process)

The law on withdrawing services



TAG Unit 3.13.1

Map © 2012 Project Mapping Limited. All rights reserved.



Law & Procedure

- Originally regulated by the Transport Act 1962, now the Railways Act 2005 (RA 2005);
- Procedure today includes:
 - Closure process [RA 2005, [Part 4](#)];
 - Consultation process [RA 2005, [Schedule 7](#)];
 - DfT (October 2006) [Railways Closures Guidance](#).
- Objections to closures.

Example

- The Kensington Olympia-Wandsworth ghost train route is part of a route being considered for closure;

Example

- The Kensington Olympia-Wandsworth ghost train route is part of a route being considered for closure;
- Part of the economic case that the rail franchise company has to make for a closure [e.g. see p.7 and p.9 of *DfT Consultation Document, Withdrawal of scheduled passenger services between Wandsworth Road, Kensington (Olympia) and Ealing Broadway*] relates to passenger numbers.

Trainspotters/rail enthusiasts

- There are a number of motivations for these individuals to use ghost train routes;

Trainspotters/rail enthusiasts

- There are a number of motivations for these individuals to use ghost train routes;
- One appears to be simply to increase numbers of passengers on ghost lines threatened by closure (hungry ghosts trains);

Trainspotters/rail enthusiasts

- There are a number of motivations for these individuals to use ghost train routes;
- One appears to be simply to increase numbers of passengers on ghost lines threatened by closure;
- When published, responses to the now-closed consultation on the Wandsworth Road, Kensington (Olympia) and Ealing Broadway line should reveal if this is true;

Trainspotters/rail enthusiasts

- There are a number of motivations for these individuals to use ghost train routes;
- One appears to be simply to increase numbers of passengers on ghost lines threatened by closure;
- When published, responses to the now-closed consultation on the Wandsworth Road, Kensington (Olympia) and Ealing Broadway line should reveal if this is true;
- But: interesting that non-legal rail enthusiasts have such a good grasp of the legal process here!

The ghost-hunters

- How do ghost train hunters find out about ghost trains on lines threatened by closure (hungry ghost trains)?;

- How do ghost train hunters find out about ghost trains on lines threatened by closure?;
- Facebook?;

- How do ghost train hunters find out about ghost trains on lines threatened by closure?;
- Facebook?;
- A new and exciting SNS?

- How do ghost train hunters find out about ghost trains on lines threatened by closure?;
- Facebook?;
- A new and exciting SNS?;
- Err... no. Remember internet forums?



An internet forum founded in 1998, and used (still!) by travel enthusiasts.

Welcome, **pjennings**.

You last visited: Aug 29, 12 at 5:31 pm

Private Messages: Unread 0, Total 5. ▾

Your Control Panel**Your Profile**[Edit Your Details](#)[Edit Profile Picture](#)**Networking**[Contacts & Friends](#)[Social Groups](#)[Pictures & Albums](#)**Settings & Options**[Edit Avatar](#)[Edit Email & Password](#)[Edit Options](#)[Edit Ignore List](#)**Private Messages ▾**[List Messages](#)[Send New Message](#)[Edit Folders](#)[Subscribed Threads ▾](#)**Subscribed Threads in Folder: All ▾**

Folder Controls

Jump to Folder:

Subscriptions (1 Threads) ▾

[View all Subscribed Threads](#) | [Edit Folders](#)**Subscribed Threads in Folder: All ▾**

Threads: 1

	Thread / Thread Starter	Last Post <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	Notification	<input type="checkbox"/>
	Nonsensically typically British train to nowhere? (1 2 3 4) Jimmie76 started Jul 17, 12	Aug 26, 12 12:09 am by Jimmie76	None	<input type="checkbox"/>

Selected Threads: Move to folder... ▾



New posts



No new posts



More than 100 replies or 15000 views



More than 100 replies or 15000 views



Thread is closed



You have posted in this thread

Forum Jump

Subscriptions ▾




FlyerTalk Forums
Welcome, pjenings.

You last visited: Aug 29, 12 at 5:31 pm

Private Messages: Unread 0, Total 5. ▼

[MyFlyerTalk](#)
[FAQ](#)
[Calendars](#)
[New Posts](#)
[Search ▼](#)
[Quick Links ▼](#)
[Log Out](#)

Forum	Last Post	Threads	Posts
Miles&Points These topics are all about frequent flyer programs - and only frequent flyer programs			
MilesBuzz! Discussion of the latest frequent flyer & hotel program buzz...only	Fidelity Bonus offers for... by PETERPNYC Today 4:04 pm ➤	16,857	324,680
Hotel Deals The place to post hotel deals conducive to mattress running, including possible pricing errors, unusually low rates, and best price guarantees. Note: Regularly posted deals from the chains are generally not considered unusually good deals.	Expedia brg tips and results by LHR/MEL/Europe FF Today 4:02 pm ➤	1,550	53,608
Mileage Run Deals The place to post airfare deals conducive to mileage running, including possible pricing errors and unusually low fares. Note: Weekly or other regularly posted fare sales are generally not considered unusually good deals.	Mileage run from BKK by clacko Today 3:58 pm ➤	29,090	400,061
S.P.A.M. Sites with Points and Alternative Miles, including referral bonuses, congas and any other loyalty currencies.	Starbucks app \$20 for a \$25... by iggyray Today 10:18 am ➤	8,136	113,260
Airline Programs			
Global Airline Alliances			
Hotel Programs			
Credit Card Programs/Partners			
Car Rental Programs/Partners			

Characteristics & advantages of forums vs SNSs

Internet Forums	Social Networking Services (SNSs)
<p>Evolving from bulletin boards, the first <i>internet</i> forum is estimated to have been created in 1994 (the WIT Project)</p>	<p>A <i>web</i> service, the first modern SNS is estimated to have been created in 1997 (SixDegrees.com)</p>
<p>Typically formal (and reasonably transparent) moderation of content</p>	<p>Inconsistent. Different SNSs have different (and not always transparent) approaches to moderating/not moderating content</p>
<p>Content presented in a hierarchical structure. More suited to detailed discussion?</p>	<p>Often content presented by popularity/time posted</p>

Summary

Summary

- Ghost trains have run since the early days of British railways (so-called 'Parliamentary trains' ran in the 19th century), for different reasons;

Summary

- Ghost trains have run since the early days of British railways;
- There has to be a better (and more eco-friendly) way to regulate this area!;

Summary

- Ghost trains have run since the early days of British railways;
- There has to be a better way to regulate this area!
- Train enthusiasts exploit black-letter law on train closures, and;

Summary

- Ghost trains have run since the early days of British railways;
- There has to be a better way to regulate this area!
- Train enthusiasts exploit black-letter law on train closures, and;
- Maybe we (IT lawyers/enthusiasts) miss a trick when we focus on social networks and their impact: older tech (e.g. forums) can sometimes do the job better!

**Want to learn more about ghost
trains?**

Some other (short) ghost train stories

- BBC News: [*On Board a real-life 'ghost train'*](#) (July 2, 2012: video 3 mins 47 seconds);
- Michael Williams, [*"The Hunt for Britain's ghost trains,"*](#) *The Independent*, Monday December 19, 2011.

Other resources on ghost trains

- Photos and information on routes (on-going) provided by the Ghost train hunters (<http://www.theghoststationhunters.com/>);
- Wikipedia on the history of ghost trains (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Parliamentary_train), and;
- List of ‘unusual’ train services in Britain, including ghost trains, compiled by Richard Maund (<http://www.psul4all.free-online.co.uk/2012.htm>).

Other resources on ghost trains

- [Photo tour](#) and [commentary](#) of the reverse ghost train London route (starting at Wandsworth Road and going to Kensington Olympia) by blogger Ian Mansfield.
- NB. Enthusiasts tend to use the terms ‘Parliamentary train’ and ‘ghost train’ interchangeably. The Parliamentary/Actual/Hungry ghost train distinction is one devised by the authors of this paper.

*“Leaving, on a ghost train: or,
where technology meets
trainspotting and direct
action.”*

Paul Jennings, University of Winchester
(paul.jennings@winchester.ac.uk)

&

Caroline Wilson, Anura Consulting Ltd
(clw1@anuraconsulting.eu)