

Stop the rail cuts campaign

This page is the archive of the campaign to Save the South London Line (SLL).

This page

- gives information about the [ACTIONS](#) rail users can take to support the campaign
- gives the latest [CAMPAIGN NEWS](#)
- explains the [BACKGROUND](#) and facts about the issues

In the Spring of 2009, SRUG joined with the Clapham Transport Users? Group, the Lambeth Public Transport Group, the two major hospitals - King's And SLAM, all local elected representatives, and the four main political parties, to form the campaign to Save Our South London Line.

- See this [flyer](#) ^[1] for facts on all the services from each station. We have mobilised many rail users who want to defend these links, and need to continue to alert all South London Line (SLL) users. ^[2]
- [See here](#) ^[3] for the Campaign's report "*The South London Line - The Vital Link*", published Feb 2010. This shows how, instead of cutting services in South London, TfL and the rail companies could be enhancing services, for just a moderate cost. See [here for latest campaign news summary](#) ^[4] .
- [See here](#) ^[5] for explanation of the relationship between the South London Line, the East London Line extension, and the proposed Victoria-Bellingham (now proposed as Victoria-Bromley) line.

Actions you can take

- **email decision makers, elected representatives & local press.** See [email addresses to write to](#).
- **join the SRUG mailing list** to be kept up to date, email: SRUG@southwarkrailusers.net ^[6]
- **check the SRUG website for news:** <http://www.southwarkrailusers.net> ^[7]
- **join online Facebook group** [Save the South London Line between Victoria & London Bridge](#) ^[8]
- **sign the on-line petition:** <http://tinyurl.com/SouthLondonLine> ^[9]
- **distribute flyers** - Here in our [flyer](#) ^[11] you can see the effect on each of the Southwark stations. We need to get the message out to all who use our local stations. We have designed some A6 pocket size flyers for you to print out for your own local station. Please carry some with you in your pocket or bag, and give out to fellow rail users at your local station whenever you travel. Where better to find people interested in this, than in your own local station? Click below for the A6 flyer for these stations
 - [Peckham Rye station](#) ^[10]
 - [Denmark Hill station](#) ^[11]

- [Queens Road Peckham station](#) ^[12]
- [South Bermondsey station](#) ^[13]
- [Clapham High St/Wandsworth Rd stations](#) ^[14]

Campaign News

- **Battle to save SLL lost:** The battle to save the SLL was lost as none of the rail bodies would create space at London Bridge for the SLL to terminate there while the station is being rebuilt during 2013-2019. In June 2010 TfL presented their report on how to 'mitigate' the loss of services to Victoria as a result of losing the SLL. See [the report here](#) ^[15]. The TfL report identified several different options that would create direct links to Victoria for Southwark stations Nunhead, Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill, and Lambeth's Clapham and Wandsworth stations, some less feasible than others. They concluded that Option 7 was the most feasible. It consisted of two elements - stopping a Kent 2tph service at Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill in peak hours, and a new Bromley-Victoria 2tph service outside peak hours. There is no current funding for the new additional Bromley service though it is feasible to lobby to get it introduced into the new post-2014 franchise. In the meantime the further studies have investigated the feasibility of the Kent trains stopping outside peak hours as well to give full coverage until the new Bromley service could be secured into the future franchise and timetables. Action now lies with the Transport Minister to take decisions to fill the gaps left in services to Victoria from Decemebr 2012 when the SLL stops.
- **TfL Review:** TfL has reviewed the impact of the cut of the SLL with London TravelWatch. See [the report here](#) ^[16] for the results which **were finally released in June 2010**. They identified several different options that would create direct links to Victoria for Southwark stations Nunhead, Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill, and Lambeth's Clapham and Wandsworth stations, some less feasible than others. They concluded that Option 7 was the most feasible so that is what they are investigating. Option 7 consists of two elements - stopping a Kent 2tph service at Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill in peak hours, and a new Bromley-Victoria 2tph service outside peak hours. There is no current funding for the new additional Bromley service though it is feasible to lobby to get it introduced into the new post-2014 franchise. In the meantime the further studies are investigating the feasibility of the Kent trains stopping outside peak hours as well to give full coverage. until the new Bromley service could be secured into the future franchise and timetables. However, Option 7 does not provide: direct links to Victoria from South Bermondsey and Queen's Road (or from Clapham and Wandsworth in peak hours), or direct links to London Bridge from Denmark Hill, Clapham and Wandsworth.

The SLL Campaign group is conferring on all this and deciding next actions.

[See the information here](#) ^[17] about an earlier stage of the review and a meeting **24th November**, and [here for results of that meeting](#) ^[18]

- **Campaign publishes own Report "[The South London Line - The Vital Link](#)",** ^[3] published **February 2010**. This shows how, instead of cutting services in South London, TfL and the rail companies could be enhancing services, for just a moderate cost.
- **Southwark Council:** Southwark Council agreed (**4th November 2009**) a cross party motion supporting fully and comprehensively the campaign to Save the South London Line. [See details here](#) ^[19].
- **Petition:** 4192 signatures had been received by **11 November 2009** when the petition was handed over to Mayor Boris Johnson at his meeting with a delegation from the Greater London Assembly. [See photo](#) ^[20] and [letter to SLP](#) ^[21].
- **Meeting with the Mayor:** The Campaign met with the Mayor Boris Johnson on **11th November 2009**

and strongly pressed the case for keeping the South London Line. He and the Assembly Members then met the Rail Minister Sidiq Khan. See **outcomes** below. [See press report here](#) ^[22], and also [Mayor's Question Time 18 November here](#) ^[23].

- **Press reports:** [see articles](#) ^[24] about inner south London rail services, inc. the campaign.
- **Emails** still being received by Minister, Mayor & elected representatives
- **Public Meeting:** [Wed 30th Sep 2009, 6.30pm for 7pm-9pm](#) ^[25] at Institute of Psychiatry, De Crespigny Park, Camberwell. See [poster](#) ^[26] & [flyers](#) ^[27] distributed. Meeting a huge success. See **outcomes** below.
- **Campaign Launch:** The official launch of the campaign, with local MPs Tessa Jowell & Harriett Harman, was marked by a rally at Denmark Hill Friday **26th June 2009** at Denmark Hill station. [Read more plus photos and video...](#) ^[28] and [more photos](#) ^[29].

Outcomes

- [London Mayor](#)
- [TfL Review](#)
- [Public meeting 30th September 2009](#)
- [Rail Minister](#)
- [Political parties](#)

London Mayor

- The campaign had asked the **London Mayor** for a meeting to put the case for the South London Line. At first, he rejected the request saying that it is a Department for Transport decision to cut the South London Line. [See press report](#) ^[30]. He is wrong as it is clear from correspondence now released that this was a joint decision and TfL had asked for the cut. But at Mayor's Assembly Questions on 14th October, Boris Johnson agreed to meet campaign representatives, and lead a deputation to the Rail Minister. This is not wholly straightforward, as the Mayor is still maintaining that TfL had no role in the decision to cut the SLL - [see press report](#) ^[31]. This meeting took place on 11 November. [See press report](#) ^[32] and also [Mayor's Question Time 18 November here](#) ^[23].
- **Mayor's People's Question Time** at Brixton Academy on 9th November 2009 was packed. [See press report](#) ^[33]. The "Save the South London Line" Campaign was there displaying the new Save the South London Line T-shirts. It was a very lively evening on all topics, and the SLL was mentioned several times in questions and comments and there was much loud support from the audience. The Mayor was left in no doubt of the importance of the SLL to south London.
- **Meeting with the Mayor:** The Campaign - Assembly Members Val Shawcross, Jenny Jones, Caroline Pidgeon, James Cleverly, Hospital rep Phil Boorman, Rail User groups Eileen Conn & John Stewart - met with the Mayor Boris Johnson on 11th November and strongly pressed the case for keeping the South London Line. He and the Assembly Members then met the **Rail Minister Sidiq Khan** who has held out a lifeline in relation to the Victoria connection. [See press report](#) ^[22]. and also [Mayor's Question Time 18 November here](#) ^[23].

TfL Review

- TfL agreed (June 2009) to **review south London rail services**. The review has now been under way since May 2009 and only in August 2009 did TfL reveal the terms of reference and only after they had drawn up a methodology which has been criticised as being biased and failing to examine London Bridge issues. TfL confirmed (4th November 2009) that their **review** of all the options

includes retaining the SLL, and keeping the [direct links into London Bridge](#) ^[34] as well as just links into Victoria. They seem sceptical but now all are being reviewed. They [met stakeholders](#) ^[17] (ie elected representatives, Councils, rail user groups, hospitals) on 24th November for interim report and discussion, and final report then due now in February 2010 [**now scheduled for 1st June 2010**]. see [here for results of 24th November meeting](#) ^[18].

- **LTW (London Travel Watch)** commissioned a one day (25th June 2009) **travel user survey** to get the facts on who is using the service and where they are coming from and going to. There are some concerns as to whether they have asked the right questions and given enough users the chance to take part, and it did not address the London Bridge issues. However, the [report has now been published](#) ^[35] and vindicates the campaign by showing nearly 90% and thousands of passengers will be seriously disadvantaged by the cuts, and it could cost nearly £4m a year. These results will now be fed into the TfL review. [LTW said](#) ^[36]: ***"It is clear from our study that this service is essential to its users, and it is absolutely vital that it is provided and maintained.?"***

Public Meeting 30th September 2009

We held a historic and **very successful Public Meeting on Wed 30th Sep** 6.30pm for 7pm-9pm at Institute of Psychiatry, 16 De Crespigny Park, Camberwell.

- Over 200 rail users came and [heard a SRUG overview on the role of the SLL in south London's rail system](#) ^[37], and heard from a panel of three rail users covering all the stations what the issues are. Then there was a rail industry panel with speakers from Network Rail, TfL and London TravelWatch, who faced over an hour of questions and comments.
- A lively debate ensued and the overwhelming sentiment of rail users was that the South London Line's direct links to London Bridge and Victoria were too precious and valuable to lose and a way had to be found to keep them. TfL acknowledged that the cut in the SLL and the Victoria?Bellingham plans left serious gaps in services to Victoria, and confirmed their review with London TravelWatch to see how those gaps might be mitigated.
- However they made it clear that their main interest was in creating the orbital rail link east and west between Clapham Junction and Canada Water, and not in maintaining the area?s direct links into central London. Network Rail in explaining the rebuilding of London Bridge station between 2012-2015 said that he would not recommend the retention of the SLL as it was not ideal, but it was not impossible.
- So in both cases - the link to Victoria and the link to London Bridge - the obstacles to retaining the SLL and maintaining and improving direct connections to central London are not overcome yet; but the meeting confirmed there is room for movement which the campaign will continue to probe and explore. Read [South London Press report](#) ^[38] and [Southwark News report](#) ^[39].

The Rail Minister

- The **Rail Minister** agreed to meet the local MPs with user representatives. These meetings took place.

The political parties

- All **four main political parties** in both Southwark and Lambeth have declared publically their support for the campaign. Southwark Council has agreed (4th November 2009) a cross party motion supporting fully and comprehensively the campaign to Save the South London Line. [See details here](#) ^[19].

Email addresses to write to

- **email your views to the decision makers:** tell them why you value the service, ask them to stop the cut, and instead implement the proposals in the Campaign's report "[The South London Line - The Vital Link](#)"^[3].
 - Theresa Villiers (Transport Minister) at: theresa.villiers@dft.gsi.gov.uk^[40]
 - Boris Johnson at: Mayor@london.gov.uk^[41]
- **email your elected representatives:** you can cc to your representatives the emails you send to the Minister and Mayor, or write directly to your representatives giving your views and asking them to press the Minister and the Mayor to save the service
 - Southwark MPs: Harriet Harman harmanh@parliament.uk^[42], Tessa Jowell jowellt@parliament.uk^[43], Simon Hughes HughesSH@parliament.uk^[44], Lambeth MP: Kate Hoey Hoeyk@parliament.uk^[45]
 - London Assembly Member, Lambeth & Southwark: valerie.shawcross@london.gov.uk^[46]
 - London Assembly Member & Southwark Councillor: caroline.pidgeon@london.gov.uk^[47]
 - London Assembly Member, Transport Committee Member: Jenny.Jones@london.gov.uk^[48]
 - South Camberwell ward, Denmark Hill station: peter.john@southwark.gov.uk^[49], veronica.ward@southwark.gov.uk^[50], stephen.govier@southwark.gov.uk^[51]
 - The Lane ward, Peckham Rye station: mark.glover@southwark.gov.uk^[52], nick.dolezal@southwark.gov.uk^[53],
 - Nunhead ward, Queens Road Peckham station: Fiona.Colley@SOUTHWARK.GOV.UK^[54], sunil.chopra@southwark.gov.uk^[55], althea.smith@southwark.gov.uk^[56]
 - Southwark Council Leader: peter.john@southwark.gov.uk^[49]
 - Southwark Council Cabinet Member for Regeneration (inc. rail): fiona.colley@southwark.gov.uk^[57]
- **email a Letter to the local press:** letters@slp.co.uk^[58], letters@southwarknews.org^[59] Getting letters published in the local press is very important to keep the issue alive for the public. Keep the emails going to them!
- **email London Travel Watch**^[60]: cc emails to this address: Tim.Bellenger@londontravelwatch.org.uk^[61]

Background notes

Year by year cuts to services into central London

All the stations covered by the Southwark Rail Users Group (SRUG) - Peckham Rye, Denmark Hill, East Dulwich, Nunhead, Queens Rd Peckham, South Bermondsey - have direct services into central London through the trains going to the central London stations London Bridge, Victoria, and Blackfriars. The trains to these central London stations take only a short time eg from Peckham Rye, between 8 and 16 minutes. So within that time rail users can be on the Tube - one of 6 lines - Victoria, Circle, District, Northern, Bakerloo, and Jubilee. This is the nearest inner SE London can get to being on the Tube.

But it depends on having enough trains coming in from the south from various directions to make this possible. The services to London Bridge and Victoria are being salami sliced year by year and on the way to ruining the virtual Tube service. The cut to the South London Line is the latest of these bit by bit cuts.

SRUG has joined with the Clapham Transport Users? Group, the Lambeth Public Transport Group, all local elected representatives, and representatives of the four main political parties, to form the campaign to Save Our South London Line. See this [flyer](#) ^[62] for facts on all the services from each station.

Decision

As a result of the shocking news in March 2009 of the secret deal between TfL and DfT to axe the planned Victoria-Bellingham service (via Denmark Hill & Peckham Rye), local rail user groups have come together with the major hospitals at Denmark Hill and local elected representatives to form the campaign to **Save Our South London Line**. The latest decision, like the one taken in 2008 to axe the Victoria-Denmark Hill-London Bridge service in 2012, shows the low priority the rail industry gives to our inner south London direct connections into central London. We have to change that before 2012.

The shock was to discover that TfL have decided without any consultation to increase the rail links east-west between Clapham Junction to Shoreditch, at the literal expense of the direct services between inner south London and central London. The funds for the Victoria-Bellingham train, via Clapham High St, Denmark hill, Peckham Rye and Nunhead to central London, have been switched to pay for part of the new orbital railway line, ie the East London Line extension between Canary Wharf and Clapham Junction. TfL are justifying this by saying that more people want to travel east-west than into central London.

Evidence?

They have published no evidence supporting this, and the campaign believes the opposite is probably the case, and that more people want to travel into central London than out to Clapham Junction and Shoreditch. The new orbital east-west links created by the East London Line extension are a welcome addition to the inner south London rail services. But they cannot be viewed as TfL does as a better value replacement for the direct trains into central London.

As a result of the outcry since this secret decision was uncovered, TfL have said they will review the south London services. The campaign needs to work to ensure that all the stakeholders, including the rail user groups and the elected representatives, are fully involved in the review to ensure that the right questions are asked and the right information sought to answer them.

East London Line Extension (ELLX2) to Clapham Junction

The East London line ihas been extended to New Cross and Croydon and opened in June 2010. The latest decision to switch funding from the inner south London services to Victoria is to build the East London Line Extension phase 2 (ELLX2) from Surrey Quays to Clapham Junction via Queens Road Peckham, Peckham Rye, Denmark Hill, Clapham High St and Wandsworth Road. This would open in 2012, and the South London Line to London Bridge and Victoria would be closed. TfL say that more people want to travel east-west in inner south London than to London Bridge & Victoria. The Campaign welcomes the extra service east-west but disagrees that it should be provided by reducing services to central London.

The ELLX2 has been promoted as bringing the Tube to inner south London and especially Queens Road, Peckham Rye, and Denmark Hill. But the ELL is NOT THE TUBE. It is a suburban orbital Overground rail service run by TfL, linking with the North London Line. It is the rail equivalent of the road North and South Circulares, and not about getting people in and out of central London. If you want to get to east London or south west London the ELLX will be a boon. But if you want to get to central London it will make the journey worse because it is replacing some of those services.

Trains to Blackfriars

[38] <http://www.bellenden.net/sites/default/files/0910.02%20SLP%20public%20meeting%204%20redcd%20IMG.jpg>
[39] <http://www.bellenden.net/sites/default/files/09.10.08%20SNews%20JS%20Qs%20rdcd%20IMG.jpg>
[40] <mailto:theresa.villiers@dft.gsi.gov.uk>
[41] <mailto:Mayor@london.gov.uk>
[42] <mailto:harmanh@parliament.uk>
[43] <mailto:jowellt@parliament.uk>
[44] <mailto:HughesSH@parliament.uk>
[45] <mailto:Hoeyk@parliament.uk>
[46] <mailto:valerie.shawcross@london.gov.uk>
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[49] <mailto:peter.john@southwark.gov.uk>
[50] <mailto:veronica.ward@southwark.gov.uk>
[51] <mailto:stephen.govier@southwark.gov.uk>
[52] <mailto:mark.glover@southwark.gov.uk>
[53] <mailto:nick.dolezal@southwark.gov.uk>
[54] <mailto:Fiona.Colley@SOUTHWARK.GOV.UK>
[55] <mailto:sunil.chopra@southwark.gov.uk>
[56] <mailto:althea.smith@southwark.gov.uk>
[57] <mailto:fiona.colley@southwark.gov.uk>
[58] <mailto:letters@slp.co.uk>
[59] <mailto:letters@southwarknews.org>
[60] <http://www.londontravelwatch.org.uk>
[61] <mailto:Tim.Bellenger@londontravelwatch.org.uk>
[62] http://www.bellenden.net/sites/default/files/A4%20fact%20poster%20by%20stations%20mtg%20version_1.doc