



NEW-LOOK LONDON: Work has started on the Crossrail station at Canary Wharf in Docklands. The line is expected to open in 2017

Campaign successes

Two major Railfuture campaigns look well on the way to a successful conclusion. Both Crossrail and the plan for an orbital rail network for the capital received significant boosts in February.

Work started on the new £500million Crossrail station at Canary Wharf, above, where there will be shops and a rooftop park above the station.

The Government estimates that building Crossrail will provide a £20billion boost to the UK economy and could create 30,000 jobs. The line, which opens in 2017, will provide a direct link to Heathrow Airport on the other side of London.

Construction starts next year on the line itself and it should be open by 2017. "Crossrail is vitally important to help London keep pace with rapidly developing cities in other parts of the world," said Canary Wharf Group chief executive George Iacobescu.

There was more good news for Docklands when the new Light Railway service (right) to Woolwich Arsenal started on 12 January using a new tunnel under the River Thames.

This £180million project is a major step forward by Transport for London in linking the rail networks north and south of the river, even though the extension is only 1.5 miles long.

But passengers from elsewhere on the London rail network were dismayed to find that their pay-as-you-go cards were not valid on the Southeastern trains that use Woolwich Arsenal station.

According to its website, Southeastern will be "implementing" pay-as-you-go Oyster this year. It can't come a minute too soon.

But there was better news in February when agreement was at last reached to complete an orbital rail line for London, based on the East London Line Extension which is already under construction and should be complete by 2011.

Mayor of London Boris Johnson and the Government have agreed a £75million package to clear the way for a line from Surrey Quays in the east to Clapham Junction in the west.



GOING SOUTH: The Docklands Light Railway now goes to Woolwich

You can download information from www.railwatch.org.uk and www.railfuture.org.uk