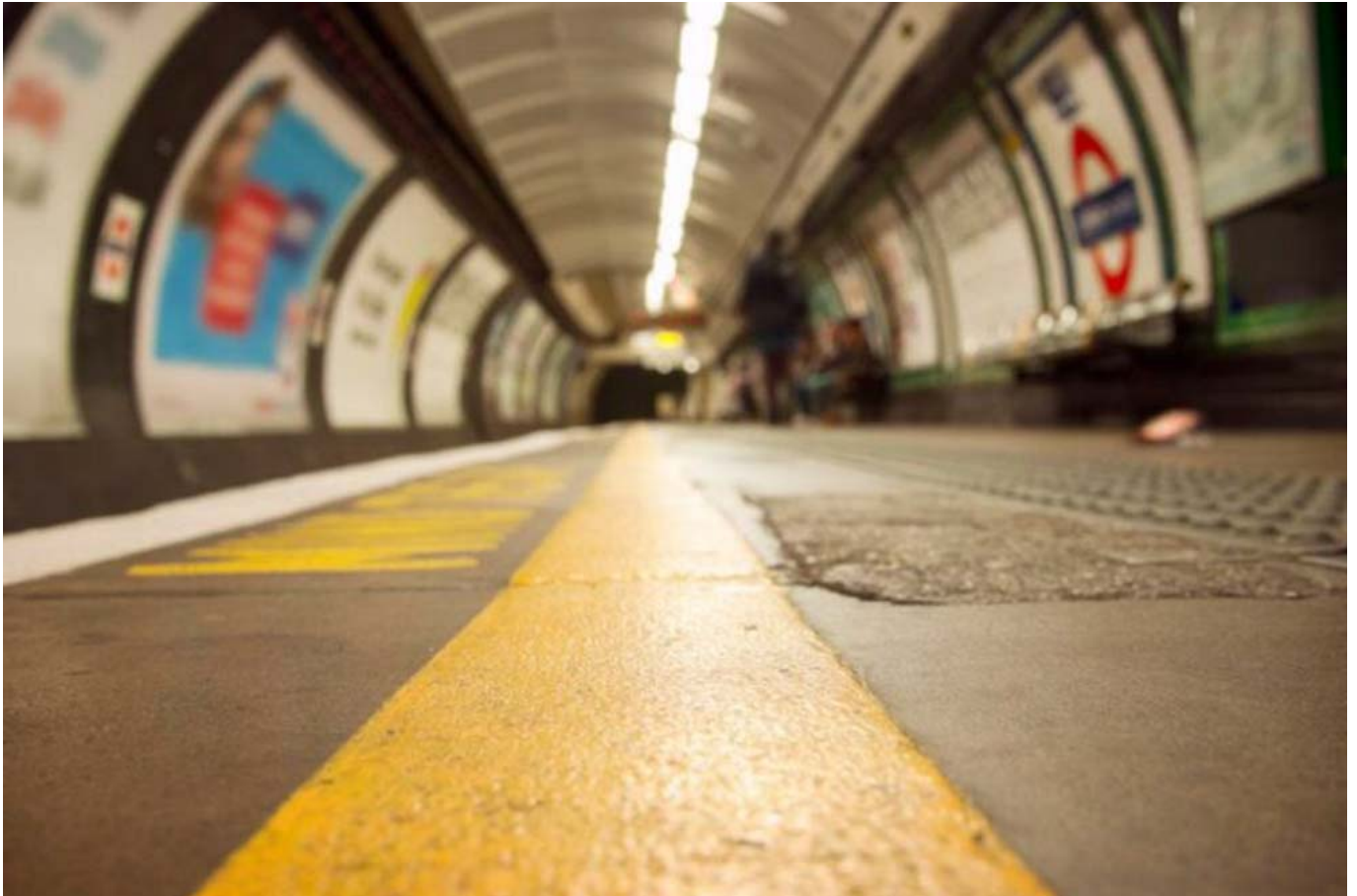


## In The News | 20th January 2022 | Latest Rail News

January 20, 2022



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Londoners will still be expected to wear face masks on the Tube, Sadiq Khan has confirmed as he urged ministers to rethink the end of Plan B.

The Metro reports that the Mayor said wearing a face covering is one of the most important things people can do to prevent the virus from spreading.

Boris Johnson has announced the mandatory wearing of masks on public transport will end from January 27th.

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South Yorkshire mayor Dan Jarvis has escalated a war of words with Grant Shapps after the transport secretary branded him “irrational” over his criticism of the controversial Integrated Rail Plan (IRP).

An article in the New Civil Engineer says Jarvis compared Shapps to a toddler having a tantrum following the minister’s column in the Yorkshire Post yesterday, which castigated northern leaders for “irrational” and “spectacularly wrong” opinions.

Several key regional and industry figures have criticised the government over the IRP, which scrapped plans to extend HS2 infrastructure to Leeds and instead promised a series of upgrades, electrifications and other new lines.

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Trade unions have warned that plans to slash ticket office opening hours at railway stations across Scotland could put passengers’ safety at risk.

An article in the Cumnock Chronicle says ScotRail announced last week that it planned to reduce the opening hours of ticket offices at stations across the country as a response to passengers’ changing travel

habit.

RMT general secretary Mick Lynch said: “These proposals affect nearly all of the ticket offices in Scotland and will undoubtedly worsen passenger service and accessibility as well as turning many of our stations into a mugger’s paradise.”

A ScotRail spokesperson said three ticket offices are proposed to close but the stations will remain open with all other facilities remaining, such as ticket vending machines, help points where customers can speak to staff, and 24-hour CCTV.

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Network Rail is removing trees and vegetation on the West Highland Line between Craigendoran and Helensburgh Upper as part of a new trial project to improve lineside biodiversity.

When the felling and removal of trees is complete, the area will be replanted with native trees and shrubs including Holly, Hawthorn, Blackthorn, Rowan, Hazel and Elder.

Network Rail says the replanting will benefit the surrounding wildlife and is part of a trial approach which, if successful, will help Network Rail work towards targets which will see no net-loss of biodiversity by 2024 with an overall net-gain by 2035.

*Photo credit: Transport for London*