



Update from Govia Thameslink Railway and Network Rail

October 2018

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We wanted to provide a progress update on the plans to progressively improve the timetable for passengers, and to update you on forthcoming works.

Thameslink and Great Northern timetable

Since the interim timetable was implemented on 15 July on Thameslink and Great Northern, performance has stabilised providing more certainty for passengers. Throughout September we gradually added services to the timetable restoring all those in the high peak - the busiest peak hours to and from London.

In December, we plan to add around 200 extra weekday services into the timetable providing more capacity and greater connectivity through the day. This is broadly made up of 30 peak and 170 off peak services, expanding the weekday timetable to its full operation planned originally in May.

The individual changes can already be viewed in online journey planners such as <http://www.nationalrail.co.uk> and updated timetable booklets will be available to download from websites from Monday 29 October <https://www.thameslinkrailway.com/timetables> & <https://www.greatnorthernrail.com/timetables>.

We will update our customer messages through posters and information screens at stations, and passengers will be encouraged to 'check before they travel' so they become aware of the additional services that may be suitable for them. We are also in the process of briefing staff so that they can pass on the information to customers at local stations.

Thameslink and Great Northern weekend timetable

The weekend timetable will continue in its current format for now, with more services planned by May 2019. The industry planning and approval process for weekend timetables continues to be behind the normal timescales which provide 12 weeks' notice to passengers. With increased investment rightly going into the infrastructure on our network, including an additional £300m confirmed last year, the engineering access needed at weekends has naturally risen too and

that requires more short-notice planning. This simplified weekend timetable means engineering work alterations can be overlaid in a shorter than usual timeframe. There is every intention of returning to normal industry agreed timescales and both planning teams in GTR and Network Rail continue to work to do this as quickly as possible.

Southern and Gatwick Express timetable

On Southern and Gatwick Express, most services in the winter timetable remain unchanged with just some timing alterations particularly on the east coastway. Performance has been improving with year-on-year uplifts in PPM for the last three periods. In period 6 (the four weeks to 15 September) for example, PPM was 89.9% - the highest on the Southern network since 2013.

<https://www.southernrailway.com/timetables>

Planning approach to winter timetable

You'll be aware that the industry took the decision to limit the number of changes made to the winter timetable which starts on 9 December, taking a more cautious approach and seeking to learn lessons given the disruption resulting from the timetable implementation in May. A new industry 'Project Management Office' (PMO) has been set up with an umbrella view across timetable planning nationally, and all amendments must pass through this organisation for approval. This team sits within Network Rail and is reinforced with independent assessment and review.

Given this revised approach, some changes originally planned on our network for this December won't be included, however, in line with the new PMO timescales, we've already progressed plans for the timetable change next May, engaging with stakeholders and passenger user groups so that they help us shape the proposals. We will continue to encourage these discussions as we confirm plans for May, and move on to planning December 2019.

Forthcoming works

Over Christmas and New Year Network Rail will remodel a major junction and renew signalling at Battersea, just outside London Victoria. From 23 December to 1 January, this work will mean that Gatwick Express services will not run and Gatwick Airport will instead be served by Thameslink services from London Bridge. Southern services will also use London Bridge or turn at Clapham Junction with buses replacing trains for local journeys. Works at Kentish Town will mean an amended service on Thameslink from 23 December, and whilst there are no major works on the Great Northern route, an amended holiday timetable will be in place as normal.

In the half term from 16 to 24 February, the closure between Brighton, Lewes and Three Bridges is a key part of the Government's £300m investment boost to tackle delay hotspots on the Brighton Main Line, focusing on Victorian era tunnels and the track that runs through them. An alternative train and bus operation is in planning, alongside ticket acceptance on other operators, parking alternatives and station operations at each of the impacted stations.

Customer communications are underway to keep passengers informed of these works.

Special industry compensation

The special industry compensation seeks to recognise the impact on passengers most affected by the disruption following the changes in May, and to go some way to say sorry for that disruption. The scheme has been open since the end of August and 63,000 customers were identified from season ticket data on our retail systems and were contacted as part of phase 1. Phase 2 runs until 30 November where season ticket holders can contact us if, for example, they bought their ticket through a third-party. Then the final phase is for regular travellers who do not hold a season ticket. We know that many of you felt

strongly that this should be included in the scheme and we will let you know how this will work over the next few weeks.

Keeping you up to date

We will continue to update you about service performance each week, and on our progress on the winter timetable which will be closely monitored as we introduce the extra services and they bed-in. The true measure of success of the timetable will become apparent in January once we have had this bedding in period and due to the need to take into account planned works over December and extremes of weather. We will have our Annual Stakeholder conference on the 27th November, where we will be able to update you further and we will keep sending out weekly newsletters to you as normal.

Yours sincerely

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To sign up for free alerts and to find out more about the work – including the dates of planned weekend closures – go to www.brightonmainline.co.uk. News and information will also be shared on Twitter, [@brighton_line](https://twitter.com/brighton_line).