

On Track



Breaking the ice this winter

Autumn is waning and the first frost of winter has arrived, but behind the scenes the teams at Southeastern and Network Rail have been putting their plan in place to handle whatever the weather is getting ready to throw at London, Kent and East Sussex.

And with 540 miles of track on the network it's easy to see the scale of the challenges and potential problems posed by winter. When the mercury plummets, even the lightest shower of rain or dusting of snow can freeze and become compacted on the rails, insulating the electric rail and preventing trains from drawing power

or being able to move with any speed. And in the worst cases, it prevents them from being able to move at all.

We're constantly keeping a close eye on the weather forecast and from December the decision can be made to implement a Winter Weather Timetable based on what's predicted or – in the worse circumstances – a Severe Winter Timetable. Southeastern has a daily call with Network Rail to ensure they can react to differing weather conditions.

If Network Rail advises Southeastern that ice and light snow is expected then the Winter Weather Timetable is put into action. This means that there will be a reduced service on Mondays to Fridays with less frequent trains throughout the day, but some additional services at Peak times. Saturdays and Sundays will also have an amended service. Train times will be different, trains won't split or attach so passengers may need to change trains, and Peak trains will be busier.

If heavier snow is forecast this triggers the Severe Winter Weather Timetable, which means that train times will be different, services will be much less frequent, and some stations will be closed. In the most extreme cases all services will be stopped in order to protect the safety of Southeastern's passengers and employees.

Southeastern aims to give three days' notice that timetable changes might be necessary – and 24 hours' notice of any specific changes.

We're ready

Southeastern will be working round the clock with Network Rail to mitigate and prepare for the challenges of winter weather.

With Network Rail, we have...

- A fleet of snow-and-ice-busting trains, each fitted with de-icing fluids, adhesion gel and snow ploughs
- Applied heating strips on sections of the electric rail and installed heaters and NASA-grade insulation on points susceptible to freezing
- Ghost trains ready to run through the night to keep tracks and infrastructure as clear of ice as possible.
- Teams at each station with grit, shovels and anti-ice treatment on standby.

For more information visit:
www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/winter-weather



Punctuality performance praised



ver the past two years, punctuality on Southeastern is up nearly 10 per cent.

During the last 12 months more than 440,000 trains have arrived within one minute of their scheduled time – which is a six per cent increase of all trains – thanks to our close working relationship with Network Rail.

Performance rewarded

As a result, Southeastern is now the best performing large train operator in the country for On Time punctuality and we have the lowest level of average passenger delay and cancellation.

The punctuality improvements led Southeastern to be Highly Commended in the prestigious Passenger Operator of the Year at the National Rail Awards, the industry's equivalent of the Oscars.

The panel of independent judges praised Southeastern for our substantial and sustained improvement in punctuality, achieved by working closely in partnership with Network Rail to overcome performance challenges.

Delay Repay 15 to boost satisfaction

In a move that is expected to boost passenger satisfaction, Southeastern has

halved the time passengers are delayed before they can claim compensation.

Delay Repay 15 means passengers delayed by 15 minutes

or more will receive money back to compensate them for their delay, whereas compensation was previously only applied for delays of 30 minutes or more.



Key smartcard extended

Southeastern's Key smartcard can now be used on Thameslink, Southern and all other train services run by Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR).

Both companies now have interoperable smartcards, making it possible for passengers to travel seamlessly across both networks.

Earlier this year, Southeastern introduced single and return fares for the Key, alongside season tickets. At Southeastern we are actively pushing for even more customers to use the Key and have been running competitions where recent switchers can win a free year's season ticket.

Support for hidden disabilities

Recognising that many disabilities are hidden, Southeastern to be the nation's first train operator to support independent travel for passengers.

The Just A Minute (JAM) card and Sunflower Lanyard schemes are designed to support our passengers who require more time or assistance, such as those with autism, learning difficulties, or who struggle to communicate. Southeastern has begun trialling the two significant schemes on our Tonbridge to Hastings route.

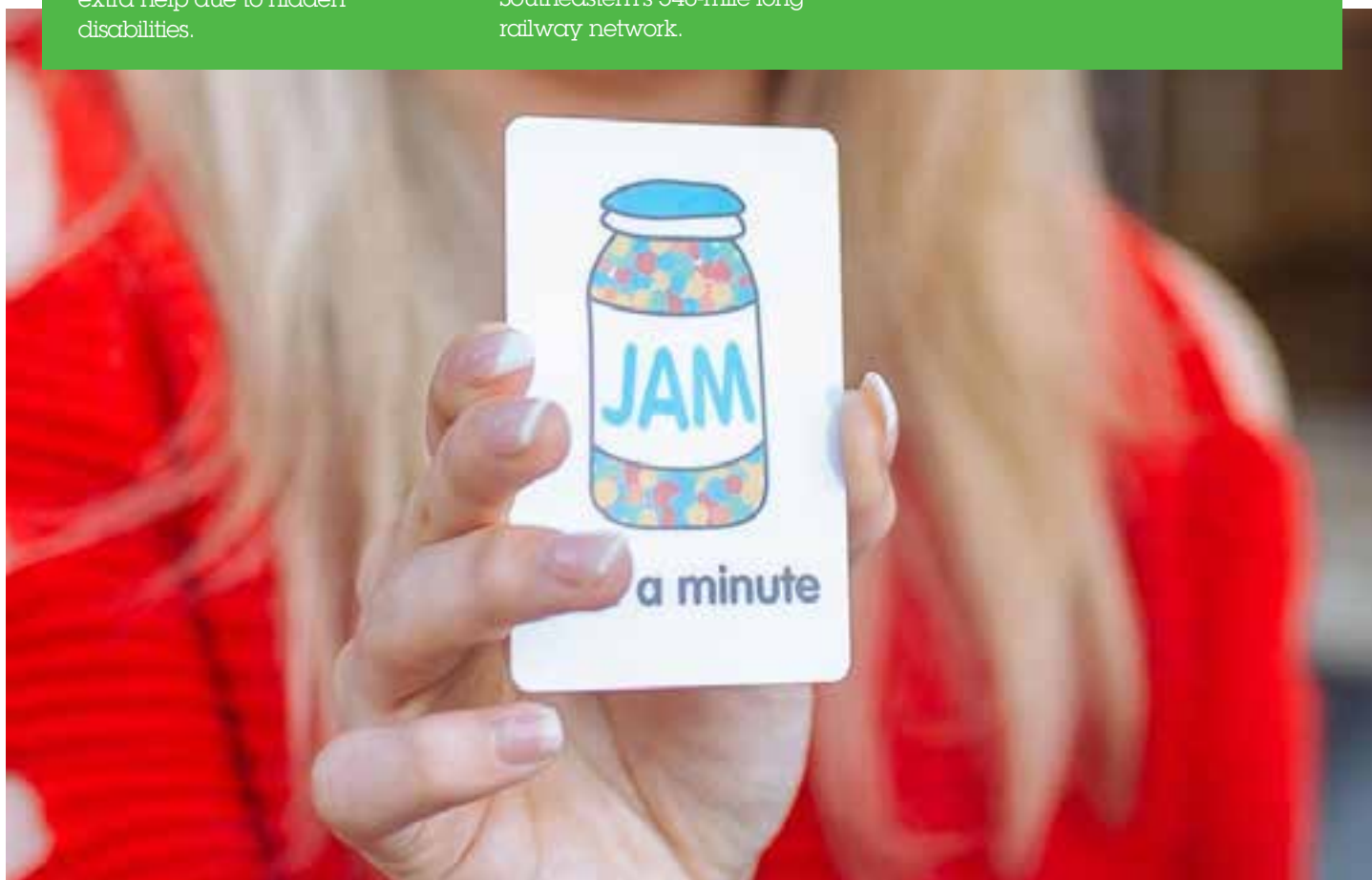
The JAM card enables the user to discretely inform a member of staff that they might need a bit more time and support to make their journey.

Similarly, wearers of the Sunflower Lanyard can be identified by Southeastern employees as possibly needing extra help due to hidden disabilities.



The Southeastern trials were welcomed by Nusrat Ghani, Minister for Accessibility in the Department for Transport. If the trials are successful, the schemes will be rolled out more widely across the 176 stations, covering Southeastern's 540-mile long railway network.

No qualifying list of conditions apply to these initiatives, and a Sunflower Lanyard or JAM card can be obtained at the stations on the Tonbridge to Hastings route.



10 years and 100 times to the moon and back



The Highspeed service has recently passed the 10-year milestone of connecting Kent and central London.

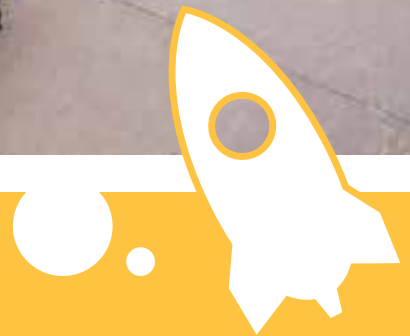
Thanks to everybody at Southeastern, Hitachi Rail and HS1, the Highspeed service currently has a 92% passenger satisfaction rating, one of the country's highest – and passenger numbers have seen a compound growth of more than 11 per cent each year.

Travelling at speeds of up to 140mph, it is the UK's fastest domestic train service.

During the last 10 years, more than 100 million passenger journeys have

been made possible thanks to the 29-strong fleet of Javelin trains which collectively have travelled more than 48 million miles – equivalent to 100 trips to the moon and back.

Over the coming weeks, passengers will see their local stations and Highspeed Javelin trains decorated with a newly-designed, 10th anniversary logo. Southeastern has also unveiled a specifically-branded train that will join the rest of the 29-strong Highspeed fleet, many of which are named after famous British athletes or which carry commemorative poppy or rainbow liveries.



Time travel

Journey times cut between London and...

- Ebbsfleet from 51 minutes to 18 minutes.
- Ashford from 81 minutes to 38 minutes
- Canterbury from 1 hour 45 minutes to 56 minutes

Choo-choose the Santa Train

Children living close to five stations in north Kent will have the opportunity to meet Santa and Mrs Claus aboard the Santa Train on 14 December.

The event has been made possible thanks to the combined efforts and festive cheer of Southeastern's staff at Kemsley,

Queenborough, Sheerness, Sittingbourne and Swale stations, working alongside Kent Community Rail Partnership, Swale Borough Council and Sustrans.

Children and their parents will be joined by superheroes, and have the opportunity for 'a selfie with an elfie' as well as craft activities and face painting.

