

# May 2019 Timetable

Highlights and  
Response to  
Feedback

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# Foreword

# 1

Over November and December last year, we asked passengers and stakeholders for their feedback on our proposals for timetable changes which will come into effect in May 2019. We understand how crucial the railway is for the communities we serve and that getting the timetable to meet local needs is really important – so we were really pleased to such a large response to the consultation.

We have listened to what our passengers and stakeholders have told us and where possible we have accounted for the feedback we received during the consultation process. We know that factors such as capacity – the space and comfort onboard our trains and service frequency are very important to customers, and where we've been able to make changes to alleviate crowding, in particular, we have.

I am delighted to say that more than two thirds of our customers agreed, to one extent or another, with the proposals we put forward and we are pleased to announce that we will be going ahead with the vast majority of our proposals, which will see a large number of passengers significantly benefit from faster journey times and more regular services.

Our changes will mean that passengers using our services in places like Ashford, Maidstone, Canterbury, Dover, and Bromley will get a few minutes back every day. Meanwhile, passengers on other parts of the network, such as Stone Crossing, will see long gaps in service provision close, with more regular services at stations where trains were spread out unevenly or where there were long periods between two services.

But we have been able to go even further in the changes we're making this May, stretching our service provision even further than before, by introducing new calling points and providing new services and journey options for passengers that did not exist before.

We look forward to continuing to work with our passengers and stakeholders over the coming weeks as we implement these changes and we will be back in touch later in the year to gather your views ahead of the next round of timetable changes in December 2019.



David Statham

**David Statham**  
Managing Director, Southeastern

# Overview

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**We received 402 submissions to our consultation. Out of this total, around two thirds of respondents said they would be directly affected by these changes.**

The overwhelming majority of respondents to our survey were commuters, with almost nine out of ten saying this was their primary reason for using the Southeastern railway network

The top five destination stations were, unsurprisingly, London terminals, with London Victoria being the main destination of the respondents to our consultation. The top five origin stations were all metro stations: Crofton Park, Bromley South, Orpington, Bickley and Denmark Hill. Across our total response, metro passengers were the predominant respondent group to our consultation.

Of those who said they were directly affected by the proposals, around two thirds said they agreed, or agreed to some extent, with the changes. When also factoring in those who said they weren't directly affected by the proposals, the proportion of respondents who agreed, or agreed to some extent, was higher.

While the response rate was larger than we anticipated, the overwhelming majority of comments we received in response to this consultation were not in relation to the specific changes which we set out in our consultation document. In many cases, comments we received from respondents were in regards to capacity, direct connections, and service frequency from their local station. There was a large volume of praise for improving journey times on a number of services on the Southeastern network. Out of the comments which expressed an issue or concern with our services, only a very small minority were regarding the specific changes we set out in our May 2019 proposal document.

All the comments we received were considered for the May 2019 timetable revision and a substantive proportion will be re-evaluated later this year, for December 2019, when we will make another round of timetable changes.

# Highlights in the May 2019 timetable changes

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### Reduced journey times for passengers on many services across the network

The main benefit of the changes we will be bringing forward for May 2019 will be the journey time reductions on various routes, allowing us to give a few minutes back every day to many passengers on our network.

Some of the key routes which will see journey time reductions on some or all of the services which call there:

**ASHFORD INTERNATIONAL – LONDON VICTORIA;** 1-3 minute journey time reduction on a large number of services, at all stations on the route, including: **Maidstone East, East Malling, Borough Green & Wrotham, Otford, Bromley South** and other stations.

**CANTERBURY WEST – LONDON VICTORIA;** 1-3 minute journey time reduction on a large number of services, at all stations along the route, including: **Chilham, Ashford International, Maidstone East, East Malling, Borough Green & Wrotham, Swanley, and Bromley South** and other stations.

**DOVER PRIORY – LONDON VICTORIA;** 1-4 minute journey time reduction on a large number of services, at all stations along the route, including: **Snowdown, Aylesham, Canterbury East, Faversham, Sittingbourne, Rainham, Chatham, Rochester and Bromley South** and other stations.

**RAMSGATE – LONDON VICTORIA;** 1-4 minute journey time reduction on a large number of services, at all stations along the route, including: **Margate, Herne Bay, Whitstable, Faversham, Sittingbourne, Gillingham, Rochester, Bromley South** and other stations.

### Filling in gaps in service provision

One of the key objectives of the May 2019 timetable revision is to fill in gaps in service provision at key points on our network. Several areas will see benefits as a result of the changes we are bringing forward in May 2019.

Bromley South will see a better spread of services, in the morning peak, to Victoria. One of the ways we will be achieving this is through a 6-minute journey time reduction on the 05:56 Ramsgate to Bromley South, allowing this service to arrive 6 minutes earlier and provide a more even distribution of fast services to London Victoria for commuters using this station during the key peak hour between 07:00 and 08:00.

At Teynham we will be resolving a large 90-minute gap in services in the evening peak, by stopping the 17:10 from London Victoria to Dover Priory at this station

At Canterbury West, a later service to London Victoria will now be provided at 22:12 filling a gap in the late evening period.

## New journeys from Gravesend, Stone Crossing and other stations

Two new services have been added from Gravesend in the early morning peak, which will give passengers using this station new journey options to London, helping commuters arrive at London in time for a 6am or 7am start.

From May 2019, the following services will now start at Gravesend:

[04:55 GRAVESEND – LONDON CHARING CROSS](#)

[05:25 GRAVESEND – LONDON CHARING CROSS](#)

There will also be additional peak time journey options for passengers from Stone Crossing; the 06:14 Gravesend to London Cannon St will make an additional stop there, and the evening peak 17:25 Cannon Street to Gravesend will also call at Stone Crossing.

This accompanies the change we have made to the 05:06 Tonbridge to Strood service, which is providing **new journey options for passengers at Aylesford, New Hythe, Snodland, Halling and Cuxton**, allowing them to connect to fast services into London almost half an hour earlier in the morning



# Feedback we received from passengers and stakeholders

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### Respondents primarily travel to London terminals from the outer metro area

The top five stations destinations were London terminals, in the following order:

1. London Victoria
2. London Bridge
3. London Cannon Street
4. London Charing Cross
5. London St Pancras

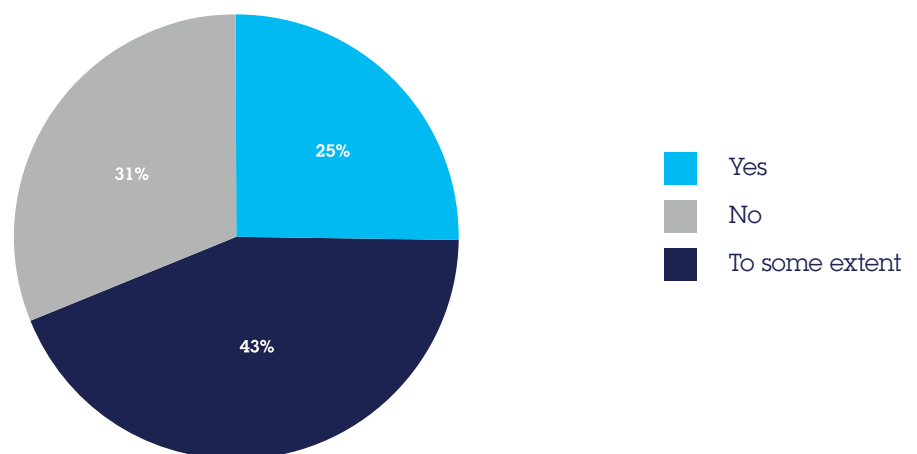
Meanwhile, for the most part respondents were more evenly spread across a range of stations of origin, with a concentration in the outer metro area.

The top five stations were located on, or near, the Chatham Mainline:

- Crofton Park
- Bromley South
- Orpington
- Bickley
- Denmark Hill

### Broad agreement with our proposals

Passengers and stakeholders were broadly in agreement with the changes we proposed for 2019. More than two thirds of our respondents said they (68%) agreed or agreed 'to some extent' with our proposals.



## Three respondents disputed specific changes in this proposal

Only a small minority of the total number of respondents raised concerns with the specific proposals we set out in the consultation. The remaining comments were focused on one of the following issues:

- Service frequency
- Capacity
- Timetabling of local services
- Connection times
- Performance
- Overcrowding
- Direct Services

## Prominent issues raised by respondents

### Connectivity

One of the largest themes in the feedback we received was about connections following the May 2018 timetable changes, with a number of users saying they have found connection times between services increase as a result of changes introduced last year

### Quicker journey Times

Another of one of the five biggest themes in the feedback was praise for the proposed journey time reductions for May 2019, some respondents said that these reductions would be welcome on other services, while a small proportion said that a few minutes journey time reduction wouldn't make a difference.

### Request for additional services

There were requests for a wide range of additional services on the network, especially to London terminals in the morning peak. London Victoria was one of the most frequently mentioned destinations where respondents wanted to see additional direct services from their local station.

### Longer trains / Overcrowded trains

A number of respondents, spread across the whole Southeastern network, said there were capacity issues on their service or from their station. As a result, many requested that we strengthen formations at these points or increase service frequency.

### Long gaps in the timetable

There were a number of points on the network where respondents highlighted long gaps in service provision at various times in the day. Respondents submitting this feedback tended to be commuting either from stations in the Medway or along the Sidcup line.

## Key areas on our network mentioned by respondents

### Catford Loop Corridor

A number of respondents said they would like an increase in service frequency of Southeastern services at Crofton Park, Catford, and Bellingham.

### Dartford to Gillingham corridor (North Kent)

A range of commuters who travel from stations between Dartford and Gillingham said they would like to see an increase in service frequency and more direct trains to Cannon Street, in part to address the crowding on services in the morning.



## Denmark Hill Stops for King's College and Queen Mary Hospitals

We had a significant group of respondents who said that a direct service between Denmark Hill and Sidcup was much needed; particularly for those travelling between King's College Hospital and Queen Mary's Hospital.

## Victoria to Orpington services

A number of commuters from Bickley, Orpington, and other stations on this route, said they would like to see an increase in service frequency in direct trains to London Victoria.

## Bexleyheath corridor

A small but significant group of respondents raised a range of issues about services on the Bexleyheath line, and said that increased frequency and greater capacity was required to alleviate crowding at various points along the line.



## Changes we've made in response to consultation feedback

### **The 05:06 Tonbridge to Strood service will now stop at Aylesford, New Hythe, Snodland, Halling and Cuxton**

This will allow the service to make additional stops at Aylesford, New Hythe, Snodland, Halling and Cuxton, providing a new journey option for passengers who use these stations and the opportunity to make connections with London-bound services at Strood nearly half an hour earlier in the morning.

This will not affect the overall journey time of this service, but it does mean that this service will no longer dwell at Maidstone West for 10 minutes, leaving 9 minutes earlier to facilitate the new calling points, which may affect passengers who normally board here or at Maidstone Barracks.

### **Four additional carriages on the 17:09 London Cannon St to Margate**

We received feedback regarding crowding on services running on the Chatham Mainline through Medway towns. Our own analysis of loading data has identified persistent crowding on services from London to Ramsgate as one of the most pressing issues on the network at peak hour which needs resolution.

The 17:09 London Cannon St to Margate service, where this is particularly acute, will therefore be formed of four additional carriages from May 2019, providing additional capacity to help alleviate crowding.

### **As a result, the 18:45 London Charing Cross to Hastings Service will be reduced by four carriages**

Our analysis shows that the 18:45 London Charing Cross to Hastings service is currently within seating capacity, and from Orpington onwards (16 minutes into the journey) a considerable proportion of the service's passengers disembark, meaning there is extra capacity being under-utilised at a key point in the evening peak.

As a result, this service will be formed of four carriages fewer from May 2019, to strengthen the 17:09 London Cannon St to Margate service, where crowding is particularly acute.

### **Increased boarding time at Robertsbridge and West St Leonards on the 14:15 Charing Cross to Hastings service**

In response to feedback we have had regarding school closing times at Robertsbridge and West St Leonards, and the impact that large numbers of school children can have on ensuring safety and punctuality of the 14:15 Charing Cross to Hastings service, we will be increasing dwell times at both stations to better facilitate boarding.

This will mean an increase of 2 minutes journey time on this service only, for journeys between starting before Robertsbridge and which proceed to Hastings, or any intermediary station.

This extra time will allow us to better accommodate the large numbers of school children to board, more time for the driver to exercise caution on departure, and more time for platform staff to ensure safety and identify any issues of misuse. Additionally, this change will also improve the performance of this service.

### **07:31 Dartford to London Cannon St change will no longer to take place**

This change was intended to spread departures from Dartford in the morning peak more evenly, swapping with another service on the Sidcup line. Following further scrutiny of the impact this change would have on driver resources and in conjunction feedback we received from stakeholders using the Sidcup line, we have decided not to go ahead with change.

## **Additional changes made to our proposals since the May 2019 consultation**

### **The 12:45 Charing Cross to Hastings service will see an additional 2 minutes dwell time at Tunbridge Wells**

This is to allow four carriages to be detached, which will be used to provide extra capacity on the 17:09 London Cannon St to Margate service. This service is well within capacity and there will no discernible change for passengers using this service, except an extra 2-minute wait at Tunbridge Wells. For passengers travelling the whole route, the overall impact will be a 1-minute increase to journey time, as the service is able to regain a minute between Warrior St Leonards Square and Hastings.

### **The 09:18 Dover Priory to London Victoria service is to be retimed to 09:15, to allow four extra carriages to be added during school holidays**

This will mean a 3-minute earlier arrival at stations between Dover Priory and Faversham. Passengers boarding from Faversham onwards will be unaffected.

We have made this change following persistent overcrowding on this service during school holidays. By adding three minutes to the journey time between Dover Priory and Faversham we are able to attach four additional carriage during these holidays at short notice, providing much needed capacity for passengers who need to use this service during these periods.

# Feedback to be considered for December 2019 timetable

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Any changes which we were unable to consider for the May 2019 timetable changes will be re-evaluated and considered for the next round of timetable changes in December 2019, should they be viable.

It's clear that service frequency, direct connections and capacity continue to be key issues for both stakeholders and passengers. We will continue to review our timetable ahead of the next round of change in December, to see if any tweaks can be made to provide a greater overall benefit on our network and will put our proposals out to consultation to ensure we capture feedback from passengers and stakeholders.

However, with our entire train fleet deployed on the network, providing additional capacity on one part of the network means taking away capacity on another, and we have to make careful consideration when making capacity tweaks through both data analysis, and the feedback we receive on various parts of the network, which is why these consultation exercises are invaluable to us.

As always our guiding principle is to use these changes to deliver the most benefit to the greatest number of passengers. We look forward to rolling out the new benefits outlined in this document from May and continuing to work with our passengers and stakeholders as we look to make further improvements later in the year.





**southeastern**

Friars Bridge Court, 41-45 Blackfriars Road, London, SE1 8NZ  
[southeasternrailway.co.uk](http://southeasternrailway.co.uk)

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Registered in England No. 0460660  
Registered Office: 3rd Floor, 41-51 Grey Street, Newcastle upon Tyne, NE1 6EE