

Dear stakeholder

Re: Southeastern December 2014 timetable

The £6 billion government-funded Thameslink Programme has entered the final construction phase. This involves a complete rebuild of London Bridge station, as well as new track layout and signalling. This is the most complex part of the programme and from January 2015 there will be significant changes to the Southeastern network.

To provide a service throughout and beyond this major programme of work we have developed a new draft timetable which we'd like to share with you to seek your views.

The final decision will be made by the Department for Transport, but we need your feedback before we finalise our proposals and look forward to hearing from you by close of business on 7 February 2014.

Our proposals have been influenced by four factors:

- To provide the best possible service during the Thameslink construction work at London Bridge;
- To try to meet your requests for service improvements put to us during stakeholder meetings and our "Meet the Manager" sessions;
- For the timetable to deliver the same level of performance as today's timetable, despite the reduction in infrastructure capacity associated with the Thameslink Programme;
- The need to work within Government affordability constraints while still offering the best possible service to our passengers.

No timetable will please everybody, but we've done our best to meet as many of your aspirations, put to us as part of the Direct Award Consultation and stakeholder meetings, as possible and maintain performance at a time when the Southeastern network is seeing the most sustained period of investment, engineering and construction work for many years.

Timing:

The proposed new timetable will commence in January 2015 to coincide with the Thameslink Programme schedule of work. To ensure a smooth transition, we will extend the May – December 2014 timetable by a month to January 2015 when the new timetable will take effect.

This consultation will cover the timetable in operation across the Southeastern network from January 2015 to August 2016; during which time Charing Cross services will no longer be able to call at London Bridge due to platform closures associated with the station rebuild. From August 2016, Charing Cross services will again be able to call at London Bridge, however Cannon Street services will not. The implications of this are to be worked through in greater detail; therefore we intend to consult separately with respect to the period from August 2016 to December 2017 and the subsequent timetable from January 2018 in due course.

We will also consult a detailed timetable story, in the usual manner for significant timetable changes, next year once further modelling has taken place.

Proposed benefits:

- Improvements to high speed services via Ashford;
- An off-peak all day high speed service from Deal, Sandwich, Martin Mill and Walmer as part of a circular service connecting Faversham, Ramsgate and Dover Priory. This gives faster journey times to London, direct services via Faversham and Dover to London and gives Birchington, Herne Bay and Whitstable an all-day high speed service;
- Direct services between Maidstone East and Canterbury West;
- Wider choice of London terminal destinations from East Kent stations;
- Additional later services between Dartford and Victoria via Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill;
- We have also listened to stakeholder representations and confirm we have no proposals to reduce the number of stops at Meopham and Longfield.

Summary:

1. Services via London Bridge

As a result of the Thameslink construction work, from January 2015 the seven lines through London Bridge will reduce to four, and platforms 4, 5 and 6 at London Bridge will close until the end of August 2016. Therefore Charing Cross services will not be able to stop at London Bridge during this period. Only Cannon Street trains will be able to stop at London Bridge.

Line speeds will need to be reduced for safety reasons while work is undertaken on adjacent lines, adding around two minutes to journey times.

Furthermore, as part of the new Thameslink Programme track layout, the Spa Road Junction crossover will be removed, meaning, unfortunately, that we can no longer run services from New Cross and the Greenwich line to Charing Cross.

The existing services from the North Kent Line via Greenwich operating to/from Charing Cross in the peaks, via the Spa Road Junction, are very busy and must continue to operate albeit diverted into Cannon Street as an alternative.

Cannon Street operates at full capacity and therefore other trains which operate to that station must be diverted to Charing Cross using the pathways freed up by the above diversions.

In planning for those diversions it became obvious that a gap was being created in the service provision between the Southeastern Mainline (services via Tonbridge and Sevenoaks) and Cannon Street. Likewise for London Bridge as the diversion to Charing Cross removes the opportunity to call there due to the platform closures.

We are therefore proposing to free up capacity at Cannon Street for some direct services from the Southeastern Mainline by diverting some existing Cannon Street bound services to Blackfriars.

Blackfriars provides the best alternative to Cannon Street in that it is the nearest alternative mainline station (approximately 10 minutes walk), it is situated on the Circle/District line (with step free interchange possible) and only two stops from Cannon Street. Blackfriars also has spare peak capacity since the recent station rebuild.

This approach creates a little space in the Charing Cross timetable which is important with the greater loss of track capacity between New Cross and Metropolitan Junction (two tracks

throughout) compared with a section of three tracks at London Bridge station on the Cannon Street side.

We will also look to open Cannon Street station seven days a week, working in partnership with London Underground and TfL to keep underground and bus operations aligned with the extended opening of the station. This is to maximise capacity and meet demand for services into London. We also intend to maximise the use of our fleet to provide longer trains in the off peak into Cannon Street.

Where possible, additional dwell time will be added at Waterloo East to allow for an expected increase in passengers interchanging at the station.

Detailed alternations:

Below are the proposed diversions to manage the service during the London Bridge rebuild from January 2015 – August 2016. Please note these services are subject to change and DfT approval.

Start Up

Some early morning services currently booked to Charing Cross are diverted to Cannon Street to serve St John's, New Cross and London Bridge

AM Peak

06.56 / 07.20 / 07.40 / 08.00 / 08.18 / 08.40 Slade Green services are diverted to Cannon Street

07.00 / 08.00 Tunbridge Wells services are diverted to Cannon Street

07.12 Gillingham service is diverted to Cannon Street

05.49 Dover service is diverted to Blackfriars

07.42 / 08.02 Orpington services are diverted to Blackfriars

07.19 Ramsgate service is diverted to Blackfriars

06.10 Ramsgate service is diverted to Charing Cross

06.39 Ore service is diverted to Charing Cross

07.57 Sevenoaks service is diverted to Charing Cross

06.59 Ramsgate service is diverted to Charing Cross

07.12 Folkestone Central service is diverted to Charing Cross

Daytime off peak

The Tunbridge Wells to Charing Cross semi-fast services (XX21 / XX51 TBW – CHX and XX00 / XX30 CHX-TBW) are diverted to Cannon Street

PM peak

16.45 Charing Cross to Barnehurst via Greenwich service starts from Cannon Street at 16.49

17.06 Charing Cross to Charing Cross via Greenwich service starts from Crayford at 18.01

18.34 Charing Cross to Dartford service via Greenwich starts from Cannon Street at 18.36

16.20 Charing Cross to Orpington service starts from Blackfriars at 16.21

16.46 Cannon Street to Ramsgate service starts from Blackfriars at 16.46

17.08 Cannon Street to Broadstairs service starts from Blackfriars at 17.01

18.09 Cannon Street to Orpington service starts from Blackfriars at 18.07

Evening off peak (post 20.00 until closedown)

The Tunbridge Wells to Charing Cross semi-fast services (XX21 / XX51 TBW – CHX and XX00 / XX30 CHX-TBW) are diverted to Cannon Street

The Hayes to Charing Cross services (XX14 / XX44 HYS – CHX and XX17 / XX47 CHX – HYS) are diverted to Cannon Street

The Sevenoaks / Orpington to Charing Cross services (XX06 / XX36 SEV – CHX and XX06 / XX36 CHX – SEV) are diverted to Cannon Street

The Dartford to Charing Cross services via Greenwich (XX01 / XX31 DFD – CHX and 0026 / 0056 CHX – DFD) are diverted to Cannon Street.

2. High Speed services

We have received much demand from passengers, Kent County Council, Trains 4 Deal and Dover District Council for a continuation of the high speed service from Deal and Sandwich, and if possible extending this to an all day service.

We are therefore proposing an all-day circular service connecting Ramsgate and Dover Priory. This will mean the high speed services will begin to additionally serve Martin Mill and Walmer for the first time.

This will result in a number of passenger benefits including:

- Two direct services to London rather than the existing one train per hour
- New direct journey opportunities between North and East Kent
- Two additional services from Margate and Broadstairs
- The potential to reduce ‘splitting and joining’ at Faversham which adds to journey times and performance risk.

This service will replace the existing lightly-used off-peak mainline service, meaning passengers from Martin Mill, Walmer, Deal and Sandwich wishing to travel to London and not wanting to go to St. Pancras will need to change at Ashford (for Charing Cross) or Rochester (for Victoria).

In order to moderate the financial impact of replacing a classic service with Highspeed, we have proposed to create a route-based price mechanism which will ensure that passengers from these four stations will not pay a premium when travelling to St Pancras via Faversham in the off-peak. This change in fares structure would be subject to approval from the Department for Transport.

Should these proposals be approved, it will also mean a reduction in the off-peak service pattern at Westenhanger and Sandling from two to one train per hour in line with the current level of service at weekends.

Westenhanger and Sandling received one train per hour in the off-peak (midweek) in the 2009 timetable; however this was increased to two trains per hour in response to demand from the racecourse. The racecourse has now closed and passenger numbers are relatively low in the off-peak. When special events take place we will enhance services to cater for the demand.

3. High Speed services for Snodland

It is anticipated that passenger demand for services at Snodland will grow significantly due to housing developments in the area. To meet this growth we are proposing to stop high speed services at Snodland in the peak; creating a minimal journey time increase of two to three minutes on the Maidstone West services. This is subject to the delivery of a scheme to enhance the station facilities and provide car parking and bus interchange.

4. Mainline

The DfT has announced that the Southeastern/ First Capital Connect (FCC) shared services operating between Ashford and Blackfriars via Maidstone, which currently continue to Bedford, will terminate at Blackfriars from December 2014 when the FCC franchise is re-let as part of TSGN. This may enable us to operate a third peak service between Maidstone East and Blackfriars using the rolling stock which would previously have continued north from Blackfriars.

To improve journey times and improve performance we will also be ending the process of detaching and joining trains at Faversham and Ashford which in itself causes confusion and anxiety for some customers. The impact of this proposal and the potential interchange opportunities are detailed below:

Chatham Mainline:

- Loss of 1 train per hour direct from Victoria, Bromley South, Longfield & Meopham to stations between Whitstable to Ramsgate
 - A connection is available out of the Victoria to Dover service at Faversham into the High Speed service to Ramsgate via Herne Bay of 8 minutes in the up and down direction
- There will no longer be a fast service from Dover to Victoria. One train will be all stations to Faversham then semi fast to Victoria, the other service will be fast to Faversham (calling at Canterbury East) then a slow service to Victoria.

Southeastern Mainline:

- Loss of direct service from all stations from Charing Cross (off peak) via Tonbridge to Martin Mill, Walmer, Deal & Sandwich. A connection is available at Dover of 12 minutes out of the Charing Cross service for stations beyond Dover.
- Only one train per hour from Charing Cross (off peak) via Tonbridge for stations between Ashford & Dover. There is no connection on the other half hour.
- Westenhanger & Sandling are reduced to an hourly service off peak and lose direct service to Martin Mill, Walmer, Deal, Sandwich & Ramsgate
- Only one train per hour from Charing Cross (off peak) via Tonbridge for stations between Ashford & Ramsgate via Canterbury West. A connection is available at Ashford out of the Charing Cross to Dover service at Ashford (5 minutes in the down direction and 7 minutes in the up direction)
- Chilham & Chartham are now served off peak by a service to Victoria and do not serve stations to Charing Cross via Tonbridge. A connection is available at Ashford out of the Charing Cross to Dover service (5 minutes in the down direction and 7 minutes in the up direction)

We also wish to introduce a direct hourly off-peak service between the Maidstone East line and Canterbury West.

Finally, we have listened carefully to stakeholder and passenger representations from Longfield and Meopham and opted not to reduce off-peak stops at these stations.

5. Metro

In response to calls from passengers for more late night services in the metro area, we propose to operate additional services between Dartford and Victoria via Peckham Rye and Denmark Hill at 30 minute intervals later into the evening.

We also propose to stop the hourly off-peak Victoria – Gillingham – Dover stopping services at Denmark Hill to enhance connections into the London Overground and Thameslink Routes.

6. Weekend Operation

Saturday services will reflect the Monday to Friday off peak service.

The Sunday service is in development in conjunction with the Thameslink Programme to ensure the best possible balance between providing a suitable service against the significant additional engineering access to Charing Cross and Cannon Street required by the Programme.

How to submit your feedback:

Feedback on these draft proposals is required by 7 February 2014 in order for Southeastern to comply with industry planning timescales.

Submit your feedback in writing to:

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Or email: mike.gibson@southeasternrailway.co.uk

If you need more information before responding, please do not hesitate to contact us.

Yours sincerely

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