

March 2010

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RMT Strike

The RMT has announced that signallers and maintenance workers will take strike action on 6, 7, 8 and 9 April. If this action goes ahead, Network Rail will be manning key signal boxes between the hours of 0700 and 1900, allowing us to operate a reduced service on some routes during these hours. Other routes will unfortunately be closed and no service will operate.

We are currently working with Network Rail to finalise the timetable for the strike days and will publish this on our website and at stations from early next week. While we will endeavour to run as many trains as possible, it will be a much reduced service and trains will be exceptionally busy. Passengers intending to travel on any of these days are being asked to note that no services will operate after 1850 and that they should plan their journeys accordingly. Passengers can also visit the national rail website disruption page at http://www.nationalrail.co.uk/service_disruptions/2010/dispute.html.

May 2010 timetable changes

There will be significant timetable changes on several routes from 23 May including on our South London services, West London Line, East Grinstead and Uckfield lines, Tattenham Corner and Caterham lines. The changes are largely driven by the opening of the extended East London Line service to Crystal Palace and West Croydon which will more than double capacity on that route - <http://www.tfl.gov.uk/corporate/projectsandschemes/2105.aspx>.



New timetables will be available on the Southern website in early April and delivered to stations by mid April, along with station posters. The National Rail website provides timetable information 12 weeks in advance, so journey times are already available there from 23 May at www.nationalrail.co.uk.

All timetables will be printed as mini-guides rather than larger booklets from May. This makes them easier to carry around, is better for the environment using less paper and makes them more economical to produce.

New stations – Smitham and Uckfield

Two brand new stations have recently opened at Smitham (right) and Uckfield (below) as part of the Department for Transport's National Station Improvement Programme (NSIP). Southern worked with Network Rail on the modular stations which were built off site and lifted into place at the end of 2009 for final works.



The new stations are easier to maintain, built to be more resistant to vandalism and more environmentally friendly. There are also improved facilities at both stations for staff and passengers.



Uckfield station was officially opened (left) on Tuesday 16 March by Station Clerk Jan Pratt and Mrs Mary Fox, who has been travelling from Uckfield station for the past 75 years. Also pictured is the Mayor of Uckfield Cllr Len Ashby, managing director Chris Burchell, Charles Hendry MP and Fiona Taylor, Network Rail Route Director. The station has more seating, space for a new retail facility, platform shelters and improved access for passengers with reduced mobility.

Record levels of performance

Working with Network Rail, we are currently delivering our best ever train service performance for the South London area. The percentage of all trains arriving on time at the end of the last four week period was 91.26%. This is the highest figure on record for both the current and previous franchise. On top of this, our overall train service (including South London, Sussex Coast and Gatwick Express) for last week (ending 20 March) was an impressive 94.78%.

Accessibility improvements at stations

Each year we have a budget which we put towards smaller scale projects that will improve the accessibility of our stations. Below is a list of those we have completed or will complete soon, some of which were the result of matched funding from the Department for Transport. The projects are: an accessible toilet at Horsham; automatic doors to the waiting room and a toilet at Purley; automatic doors to the booking hall at Polegate; automatic doors at Haywards Heath; handrails on ramps at Wandsworth Road, Cooden Beach and East Dulwich; an accessible toilet at Sutton; an improved drop off point in the taxi/pick up area as well as refurbishment of the accessible toilet at East Croydon and power assisted doors to the toilets at Oxted.

East Coastway consultation

The proposed changes to the East Coastway timetable will not be introduced in December 2010. After publishing the proposals, we received over 150 responses to the public consultation and all the feedback was analysed. Although several respondents were in favour of the changes, some had serious concerns, including the removal of the direct service between Brighton and Ashford. As it was difficult to demonstrate a significant overall benefit of the scheme for all involved the decision was taken not to implement the proposals. We are still talking to the Department for Transport to see if we can achieve some of the benefits, such as the additional stops at Winchelsea and Three Oaks. For more information go to:

<http://www.southernrailway.com/southern/east-coastway-timetable-consultation/>



Happy Birthday WebTIS! – book online, save time

Our online website ticketing system (WebTIS) was first introduced last February, and has enabled Southern passengers to buy tickets and find the best value ticket for their journey at southernrailway.com. In just 12 months 250,000 people have registered their details on the site to buy tickets easily.

New look and 10% off for Gatwick Express

A brand new marketing campaign for Gatwick Express was launched at the beginning of the month including advertisements in London newspapers, London tube trains, black cabs, websites such as Expedia and billboards at Victoria and Gatwick.

As well as advertising our services, the campaign promotes a new offer for passengers - a 10% discount on selected tickets booked online between 8 March and 8 April 2010 on gatwickexpress.com.



50% off returns to Southern...

Hot on the heels of the new Gatwick Express campaign, we have also launched a new campaign for the Southern brand, fronted by Loco Toledo. The new campaign, running until 11 April, is called 'Attractions' and promotes a new 50 per cent discount on Off Peak day tickets booked online. The campaign is part of our goal to attract new passengers to rail and features Loco Toledo encouraging people to travel with Southern to London or the coast to visit local attractions, such as London Zoo. Loco is starring in new TV adverts in Hampshire and Sussex and there are also a range of newspaper, website and radio advertisements plus billboards, door drops and station posters.



The first ever Brighton Marathon takes place on Sunday 18 April. It starts at Preston Park at 0900 and finishes on Madeira Drive on the seafront. We are working with the organisers on a special timetable providing services for runners and spectators. For more information visit www.brightonmarathon.co.uk.

Meet the Southern management team

Our next regular Meet the Manager session is at London Bridge on Thursday 1 April between 0730 and 0930.