

WEST SUSSEX RAIL USERS ASSOCIATION

64, Brampton Court, Stockbridge Road, Chichester, West Sussex, PO19 8PD

Tel: 01243 788028. E-mail: contact@wsrua.org.uk :

Website : www.wsrua.org.uk twitter.com/wsrua

NEWSLETTER No 4: DECEMBER 2014

London Bridge redevelopment and Christmas/New Year holiday timetable changes

There will be no Southern or Thameslink trains into or out of London Bridge between Saturday 20th December and Sunday 4th January 2015. A revised Southern service will operate across the network during this period. Thameslink trains will be diverted away from London Bridge between East Croydon and London Blackfriars. Southern has produced a booklet of its planned service by route between Saturday 20th December and Sunday 4th January and this should be available at stations or it can be downloaded from their website at:

<http://www.southernrailway.com/download/33033/christmas-2014-train-times/>

The booklet shows only service intervals rather than specific trains. But looking at it, the services on our lines on Saturdays 20th and 27th December and 3rd January appear to be the normal Saturday service but with Horsham to London Bridge trains diverted to Victoria. On Sundays 21st, 28th December, New Year's Day 1st January and Sunday 4th January there will be a normal Sunday service. Between Monday 22nd and Wednesday 24th December, and between Monday 29th and Wednesday 31st December as well as Friday 2nd January there will be essentially a Saturday service but with some variations to some of the early morning services. All Arun Valley services will run through to Victoria. I am sorry that I cannot be more specific and my advice is to check the Southern website for up to date information if you intend to travel in the morning peak.

New timetable from 5 January 2015

On Monday 5th January, normal services will be resumed but with very significant changes to the current timetable. At London Bridge, new platforms 10 and 11 will be brought into use and existing platforms 8 and 9 taken out of use. From 15 January platforms 5 and 6 will be closed and as a result no Charing Cross trains will stop at London Bridge for 18 months. All Thameslink trains will be diverted away from London Bridge until 2018 and will travel via Elephant & Castle. Also from that date, there will be only 3 lines into London Bridge instead of the current 4 and, as a result there will be some retimings and a few cancellations of Southern trains. The only changes affecting peak-hour Arun Valley trains will be the withdrawal of the 07.09 stopping service from Horsham to London Bridge and a retiming of the 07.17 stopping service from Horsham to Victoria which will now leave at 07.10 and call additionally at Faygate. In the off-peak, the 18.30, 19.02, 19.32, 20.02, 20.32, 21.02 and 21.32 stopping trains from Horsham to Victoria will be diverted to London Bridge. In the opposite direction the 20.10, 20.40, 21.10, 21.40, 22.10, 22.40 and 23.10 stopping trains from Victoria to Horsham will start from London Bridge. To part compensate for this there will be "new" trains from Victoria to Horsham at 21.02, 22.02 and 23.02 and "new" trains at 20.20, 21.20 and 22.20 from Horsham to Victoria. (All of these "new" trains currently run to and from Brighton to Victoria).

December 2015 Timetable proposals

After the January 2015 timetable changes, there will be no major changes to our trains until mid-December 2015. Then there will be major services to Monday to Friday off-peak services on the Brighton main line but also some on our services to and from London Victoria. The main proposed change for Arun Valley services is the removal of Redhill stops in each direction and a reduction in journey time of around 5 minutes. Passengers to and from Redhill

will need to change trains north of Horsham, Crawley in the up direction and Gatwick in the down with an increased journey time to Redhill of around 15 minutes. There are no proposed changes to peak-hour services. There are proposed changes to the off-peak Victoria to Littlehampton services via Hove with one train each hour being speeded up by about 5 minutes with removal of some of the intermediate stops between Haywards Heath and Worthing. No changes are proposed to existing West Coastway services.

If you want to see the consultation document it can be downloaded from the Southern website at: <http://www.southernrailway.com/download/33005.7/gtr-2015-consultation-document/>

We will be responding to the consultation in January welcoming the changes proposed to both Arun Valley services and to the Victoria to Littlehampton services. We will be asking for confirmation that these changes will also be made to Saturday services and seek clarification on whether the existing stops at Horley on services to and from the Coast are staying or being removed. We will also be pressing Southern to do something about speeding up our very slow Sunday services. Ideally we would like to see the existing off-peak weekday service replicated once an hour on the Arun Valley so that trains from Portsmouth and Chichester are routed via Horsham with an attachment there, rather than being routed via Worthing. We would like to know whether members are content with the line we are proposing to take. We need to have any comments by Tuesday 6 January.

Network Rail, South East Route: Sussex Area Route Study 2014

We will also be responding to this Study during January and this response will appear on our website. The Study, which is at <http://www.networkrail.co.uk/long-term-planning-process/south-east-route-sussex-area-route-study-draft-for-consultation/> focuses on improving capacity on the Brighton Mainline with proposed layout changes at Victoria, Clapham Junction, East Croydon and Windmill Bridge Junction (where the Victoria and London Bridge lines separate), Coulsdon, Redhill, Gatwick, Haywards Heath, Wivelsfield and Hove. If funding permits, Network Rail would like to undertake some or all of these projects in the next few years. There are no proposals for either the Arun Valley line or the West Coastway although the next stage of the Arun Valley signalling taking in Arundel, Littlehampton and Bognor will go ahead in the next year or two. There is a section on the so-called Arundel chord and this might go ahead if a more robust case can be made for it. We will be supporting Network Rail's immediate plans which also include the possible provision of a faster service between Brighton and Southampton. We will also be suggesting some improvements that we would like to see. These are reversible running through Platform 2 at Worthing, this would allow a fast train to overtake a stopping service; and reinstatement of the bay platforms at Arundel and Chichester.

January 2015 fares increase

Southern has announced that an average fare rise of 2.1% across all fares from Friday 2nd January 2015. Regulated fares for 2015, which include season tickets, have been capped by the Government at the July 2014 RPI rate of 2.5%, meaning that this year, no season tickets will be increased by more than 2.5%. The Southern £5 Advance fares will remain frozen for the eighth consecutive year and my sampling of some off peak fares suggests an increase in January of around 2%. There is a hint of additional discounts online to offset these increases.

May I take this opportunity to wish all Members and our friends at Southern and Network a very merry Christmas and a happy New Year.

Trevor Tupper - Membership Secretary