



# Customer report

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March 2021

**South Western**  
 **Railway**

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## Welcome to the eighth edition of South Western Railway's Customer Report

I am delighted to be introducing this edition of the Customer Report as the new Manager Director of South Western Railway.

Joining the business from Transport for London, I am acutely aware of what a challenging 12 months it's been for the industry. I'm also aware of how well the team at SWR has adapted and fulfilled its role of running a safe and reliable service for those customers to have needed to travel throughout the pandemic.

I'd like to pay tribute to Mark Hopwood CBE, our previous interim MD, who has returned to his permanent position at Great Western Railway. Mark led SWR through a period of unprecedented challenges, and was ably succeeded by our Chief Operating Officer, Mike Houghton, who took the reins on a temporary basis following Mark's departure.

While the vaccine rollout gives us all hope for the future, there is no escaping that the six months since the last Customer Report have continued to present significant challenges for our customers and colleagues alike. The COVID-19 pandemic has seen us have to endure two further national lockdowns since last summer, and we all faced a slightly different Christmas than we were expecting. I'm sure you'll join me in taking a moment to recognise my colleagues all across the railway who have worked tirelessly throughout the pandemic to keep the country moving and deliver our key workers safely to the front line.

Despite the current restrictions, our focus continues to be on running services for those customers who need to travel, with our amended timetable designed specifically to help key workers get to where they need to be. We have also been working closely with schools, colleges and local authorities to be able to play our part in supporting the return of all pupils.

Keeping our customers safe is SWR's number one priority, and we're continuing to clean our trains and stations more thoroughly than ever, providing hand sanitiser at key locations, and promoting measures to stop the spread of coronavirus, such as the wearing of face coverings and social distancing.

But the ongoing pandemic hasn't stopped us from making the improvements we know our customers want to see. From enhancing accessibility at Syon Lane, to upgrading the car park at New Malden, investing £1.5m in our station repainting programme, and revamping

some of our waiting rooms, we've been working hard to make our stations ready for the return of more customers later this year.

Our work to improve the railway doesn't stop at stations; we still have an unswerving commitment to improve our network's performance. Over the past year, we have seen significant improvements to punctuality and reliability and we're continuing to work closely with Network Rail to ensure these improvements are maintained well into the future.

Of course, we couldn't deliver a great railway without great people, and I'm delighted that we have recently achieved the national standard in customer service, gaining accreditation from Customer First. This recognises the hard work of our teams, who strive to deliver great journeys for you every day.

This year will also see the start of the rollout of new and modern trains across our network. Work is progressing on the introduction of the Arterio fleet onto our suburban network later this year. These trains will transform journeys, modernising the on board customer experience and improving reliability and performance on this busy part of our network.

Work is also well underway on the Isle of Wight as we undertake the £26m transformation of our Island Line. With newer trains and upgraded infrastructure, this project will enhance this small but important part of our network for years to come.

Taken together, these improvements demonstrate that we are ready to play our part as the country builds back better. Once restrictions are eased further, we'll be ready for you to travel with us again, whether that be to commute to the office, catch-up with the friends and family you haven't been able to see for far too long, or explore the delights of London and the South West.

Until then, we're continuing to work hard in preparation to welcome you back.

*Claire Mann*

**Claire Mann**  
Managing Director







# Our performance

Here are our train service performance figures from September 2020 to February 2021 (industry periods 6 to 11):

Industry period	Public performance measure	Right time	Cancelled & significantly late	Trains up to 15 mins late	Cancellations	Short formation
6	93.0%	71.3%	3.1%	96.4%	3.0%	0.2%
7	92.9%	71.2%	3.2%	96.4%	3.0%	0.4%
8	91.0%	65.8%	3.0%	96.4%	2.9%	0.6%
9	91.1%	68.7%	3.9%	95.6%	3.7%	1.5%
10	92.4%	73.8%	3.8%	95.7%	3.7%	0.0%
11	93.0%	74.7%	3.2%	96.3%	3.0%	0.0%
Year to date average	93.5%	75.2%	2.8%	96.8%	2.7%	0.4%
Feb 2020 average	80.6%	51.5%	5.4%	92.7%	4.8%	0.9%

Our performance over the last six months has continued to remain strong during this pandemic. While our focus has remained on ensuring that we maintain a reliable and punctual service for our key workers and all other customers, SWR in collaboration with our Network Rail partners, have delivered significant performance improvement initiatives.

Autumn is typically a challenging time due to leaf fall and flooding which can cause wheel slips, signalling failures and line closures resulting in significant delays.

During the Autumn of 2020, Network Rail introduced a major initiative which uses intelligent infrastructure in order to reopen lines in a safe manner after a signalling failure has occurred.

As well as this, Network Rail increased the frequency of their specialised rail head treatment trains. The result has been an increase in service punctuality of 16% compared with the same time last year.

While we recognise the reduced number of trains and customers have helped us to deliver higher levels of punctuality and reliability, our results have also been assisted by these key initiatives.

In the previous Customer Report, we stated that Network Rail has taken advantage of the reduced timetable to carry out more improvement works and has been able to reduce the number of speed restrictions across the network.

This work has continued in the past six months and there are now 80% fewer speed restrictions since 1st April 2020. This puts us in an excellent position as we get ready to increase services throughout the year to match an increase in customer demand.

Following on from the success of our Shepperton performance group, our Joint Performance Improvement Centre (JPIC) have recently established several new performance hubs.

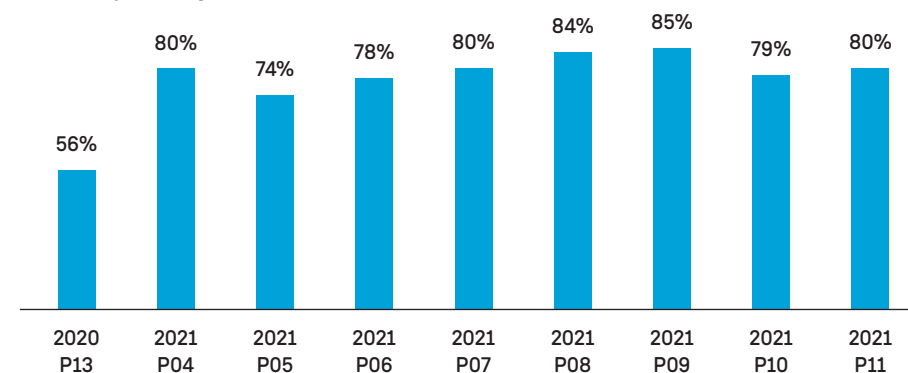
These hubs are made up of a cross-section of people from across both South Western Railway and Network Rail. They are tasked with implementing solutions to localised performance problems.

So far, the following groups have been established and are meeting regularly; Portsmouth Direct, Mainline West (Basingstoke to Weymouth), Mainline East (Basingstoke to Waterloo), Epsom, and the West of England. Soon to be established are the hubs for Reading/Windsor services and the Main Suburban.

# Our National Rail Passenger Survey results

Owing to the COVID-19 pandemic, the National Passenger Survey programme has been paused. Therefore, we thought it helpful to show what you have told us you think of your journeys from our Voice of the Customer programme instead.

## Overall journey satisfaction



Survey paused in P01-P03 2020 due to first lockdown

The National Rail Passenger Survey programme has been paused as a result of the COVID-19 pandemic. Despite this, we are continuing to drive customer experience improvements, through insight gained from our internal Voice of the Customer (VOC) programme and Mystery Shopping.

The VOC provides valuable customer insight to drive change and we are seeing a tangible improvement in satisfaction. The graph shown above from our VOC programme demonstrates an average increase of 20% in overall journey satisfaction since March 2020.

In October 2020, we introduced Mystery Shopping to SWR to check the customer experience on stations and trains. The results are collected, and then analysed to create the starting point for a action plans which help to drive change within the business and improvements in customer journeys.

Alan Penlington, Customer Experience Director, said of the new programme, 'The new mystery shopping programme will provide us with another layer in information and insight, to ensure we are always delivering for our customers. The programme will provide us with an opportunity to recognise those teams and individual colleagues that day in and day out do an amazing job for our customers.'

It will also provide us with the evidence we need to secure further investment and help ensure we consistently provide a platform for great people to deliver great journeys.'

We are continuing to hold our Digital Meet the Manager sessions, with Transport Focus, with two sessions being held since September 2020 and another session in April. This programme has been a resounding success as it provides our customers with the opportunity to safely meet 'face to face' with our senior leaders, topics covered including services on the Isle of Wight, customer service during COVID and investment in trains.

In our September Customer Report, we covered seven specific customer experience areas we were focusing on, as our customers have fed back, they were not as good as they expect them to be.

We continue to work on all seven areas to improve customer satisfaction and have completed key improvements in two areas:

- **Lost Property** – since October 2020, we have introduced individual lost property hubs on our network, making it easier for our customers to get their property back.
- **Delay Repay** – simplification of the online application process and the information displayed on our website speeding up applications.



# Our stations



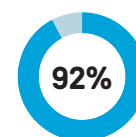
## Passenger assistance

Passenger assistance is an important part of our service, as we strive to make our railway as accessible as possible. By booking with our Assisted Travel service you enable us to ensure we have everything prepared for your journey. When assistance has not been booked in advance, we will still try to provide the assistance required whenever possible and with minimum delay.

Throughout COVID-19, colleagues have been available and ready to help customers who require assistance.

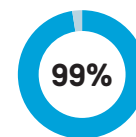
Between September 2020 and February 2021, South Western Railway staff helped to carry out over 3,900 booked assists across the network. Over 1,000 of these were either from or to London Waterloo, Clapham Junction or Guildford stations.

Here are our results recorded on booked and unbooked assistance, from September 2020 to February 2021:



### Booked assistance

92% of booked assistance was successfully completed. Of the 8% not completed, 7% were due to customers not arriving as booked (for example their plans had changed) with the remaining 1% due to disruption or staff not being available as planned.



### Unbooked assistance

99% of unbooked assistance was successfully completed. Of the 1% not completed, this was due to staff not being available at short notice.

In the September 2020 Customer Report we mentioned that we were creating a new Disability and Equality Awareness induction course and refresher package for all new colleagues joining the business and for our front-line teams.

We are pleased to announce that since 01 January 2021, we have been delivering the new induction package to all new colleagues joining the business, and our front-line teams have started their refreshers. We hope to meet the original ORR deadline of 31 July 2021 as per the terms of the Accessible Travel Policy.

## Buying tickets

Ticket office opening hours are displayed at every staffed station and are also available on our website [www.southwesternrailway.com](http://www.southwesternrailway.com) or by contacting our Customer Service Centre. Times of peak demand at the ticket office are shown at the station. We try hard to make sure that you do not have to queue at ticket machines or ticket offices for longer than 5 minutes in the peak or 3 minutes at other times. Between September 2020 and February 2021, our ticket offices have been open for 97.61% of advertised times.

The rail industry is moving away from paper tickets, and we are continually looking to make it easier for our customers to buy travel tickets from our website and app.

In addition to this, all managers in SWR will have taken the refresher by 31 March 2021. We are exploring opportunities to deliver the refresher to all colleagues in the business as soon as possible.

A new, national Passenger Assist system was launched at the end of September 2020 and we look forward to further updates of the system, including the introduction of a passenger app in the near future.

Mobile eTickets and Smartcards offer our customers more choice when it comes to buying a ticket. We have installed smartphone eTicket readers at a number of key locations across our network to make travel as easy as possible.

You can buy tickets or Smartcards online using our website [www.southwesternrailway.com](http://www.southwesternrailway.com) or through our South Western Railway App which allows you to buy a range of tickets. If you prefer, you can buy tickets and Railcards by phoning our Customer Service Centre.

All our stations (except Beaulieu Road, Holton Heath, Longcross, Millbrook and Redbridge) have self-service ticket machines where you can purchase tickets. They offer a wide choice of destinations and fares including weekly and monthly season tickets.





# Customer service

## Complaints

Over the last 7 periods we have continued to deliver on our complaint handling requirement of 95% resolution in 20 working days. The impact of the COVID19 pandemic has significantly reduced the number of complaints received

and we have taken this opportunity to work closely with colleagues across SWR to ensure that areas of frustration for our customers are addressed effectively and efficiently.

Complaints responded to	4,909
Responded to within 20 working days (%)*	99.92%
Complaints per 100k passenger journeys	19

\*NB: Based on 25.8 million passenger journeys over the six periods.

## Delay Repay

Following improvements to our Delay Repay systems over the previous 12 months, we have continued to process claims quickly, with an average processing time of 3 working days.

Compensation handling through our Delay Repay scheme has far exceed our requirements to close claims within 20 working days. Throughout the last 7 periods we have achieved an average handling time of just 2 working days, the previous 6 period average of 4 working days.

We recognise how important it is when things go wrong, we correct these from our compensation arrangements as soon as possible. The sustained good performance throughout the network during this time period has further enabled us to make changes to simplify the application process for customers.

Uptake for our ADR scheme has been consistent against the number of customers on our trains.

### Delay Repay claims per 4 weekly period

	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	Total
Percentage accepted	75%	72%	79%	77%	82%	78%	80%	77%

### Average time to process per 4 weekly period

	P5	P6	P7	P8	P9	P10	P11	Total
Average time to process (working days)	2	2	2	2	2	2	2	2

## Faults

You can report any train or station faults, quickly and easily via our Customer App or on our website, [www.southwesternrailway.com](http://www.southwesternrailway.com). Simply head to the Help and Support section and

select Report a Fault. We'll update you in each Customer Report with information about the number of faults reported and the time taken to resolve these.

Here are the details of all faults reported between September 2020 and February 2021, compared with the previous report:

	February 2021	August 2020
Number of faults reported	11	42
Average time to resolve (days)	41	81
Number of station faults	10	29
Number of on train faults	1	12
Number of faults - other	0	1



Average time taken to resolve  
**41 days**



Number of faults reported **11**



Station faults **10**



On train faults **1**

### Faults by sub categories:

Access	0
Windows/doors	0
Lighting	1
Toilets	1
Information screens	1
Heating/air con	0
Graffiti	0
Car parks	0
Ticket machines	5
PA system	0
Infrastructure	0
Other	3

### Faults by service group:

#### Mainline services

- Weymouth/Portsmouth via Eastleigh to London Waterloo **1**
- Portsmouth Harbour via Havant to London Waterloo **0**
- Exeter St. Davids/Yeovil Junction to London Waterloo **0**
- Alton to London Waterloo **0**

#### Suburban services

- Windsor & Eton Riverside/Hounslow/Weybridge via Staines to London Waterloo **0**
- Reading/Aldershot via Ascot to London Waterloo **0**
- Main suburban routes to London Waterloo **0**

#### Island Line services

- Shanklin to Ryde Pier Head **0**

# Our commitment to sustainability

At SWR we continue to incorporate sustainability into everything we do. Our approach is to deliver positive changes to our customers, communities and the environment.

Rail is the most sustainable way of travelling, emitting lower emissions compared to any other form of transportation. Our fleet largely consists of electric trains delivering a sustainable travel option.

Our Sustainability Strategy recognises four key areas for developing and embedding sustainability even further within our business.

[www.southwesternrailway.com/other/about-us/our-plan/sustainability](http://www.southwesternrailway.com/other/about-us/our-plan/sustainability)

Here's a summary of what we have delivered since September 2020:

Innovative technology	Energy and resources
<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Won the Sustainable Business National Rail Award for a clean air initiative on our diesel trains. The technology used reduced CO<sub>2</sub>e emissions by 90%.</li> <li>Introduced Automatic Number Plate Recognition (ANPR) at our stations to make parking easier for all.</li> </ul>	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Continued to divert all our waste from landfill and recycle at least 77% of all our waste each month.</li> <li>Introduced coffee cup recycling at our depots.</li> <li>Reduced our carbon emissions by 4% against our target, a 5% improvement compared to the same period last year.</li> <li>Installed LED lighting at all our stations, cutting their energy consumption by 21% in 2020 (compared against baseline 2015/16).</li> <li>Reduced our water consumption by 54% through effective use and monitoring.</li> <li>Collaborated with our suppliers to understand how we can procure more sustainably and reduce risks all the way through the supply chain.</li> </ul>

Community and engagement	Employer of choice
<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donated 700 shoe boxes and 612 gift boxes to support the homeless, elderly and families facing hardship at Christmas. This equated to over £6,500 worth of social value.</li> <li>Worked with two Community Rail Partnerships to support the setup of the 'Food on the Move' initiative which delivered food to the most vulnerable throughout the pandemic.</li> <li>Supported our Partnership Charities Surrey Search and Rescue and Daisy Chains through internal fundraising events and internal/external promotion. This included £2,500 to each charity which went towards the funding of an emergency rapid response vehicle for Surrey Search and Rescue and Neo-Natal boxes for Daisy Chains to mothers with premature babies.</li> <li>Leased four redundant spaces to the Three Rivers Community Rail Partnership to use, including setting up a 'Free Shop' initiative which takes food that would otherwise be wasted and passes it on to those who can use it.</li> <li>Increased the number of stations adoption groups to 66 (an increase of 12 since August 2020).</li> <li>Scored high at the Community Rail Awards winning the 'most enhanced station' category for the collaborative improvements at Haslemere station and received commendations in five other categories (the best results for the franchise so far).</li> </ul>	<p>We have:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Achieved success at the Personnel Today Awards, where we were shortlisted in four categories including: Apprenticeship Employer of the Year, Health and Wellbeing, HR Impact and HR Director of the Year.</li> <li>Continued to develop our apprenticeship programme, with 118 colleagues starting so far (FY 20/21). This includes 10 Engineering apprenticeships which support all different walks of life, aged from 16-36. So far, several have already achieved DISTINCTION in their End Point Assessment.</li> <li>Supported and developed our people through launching our Learning Development System (LDS). This system enables our people to access modules from people management to resilience and mental health awareness. So far, 2,061 courses have been taken up, helping develop over 1,200 of our team in just five months.</li> <li>Up-skilled our people by introducing 'Skill of the Month' zoom sessions and HR workshops which are broken down into bite-sized learning chunks. We have run 411 workshops so far.</li> <li>Achieved accreditation for the third year running for our Customer Experience Training (TrainingMark by the ICS).</li> <li>Launched Sustainability Champions and a Station Sustainability Leadership group to work together on rolling out initiatives.</li> <li>Achieved SILVER in the Investors in People 'We Invest in Apprentices assessment/accreditation'.</li> <li>Unveiled Disability Awareness e-learning to all managers and front-line staff.</li> </ul>

But our programme doesn't stop there. Over the next 6 months we will continue to deliver on the commitments we set out in our sustainability strategy whilst also looking to the future, sustainable procurement and air quality.

This information is from environmental performance data between August 2020 and February 2021 (P5-P10) and is compared with this time in 2019 and 2020.

Criteria	2020/2021	Target	Reduction (%)	Previous year (2019/2020)	Difference (%)
Our trains: average CO <sub>2</sub> e per vehicle km (kg)	0.41 <sup>1</sup>	0.43	4%	0.43	-5%
Buildings energy: total energy consumed (MWh)	13,479	13,533	On target ✓	15,803	-15%
Waste recycling (%)	77% <sup>2</sup>	Achieve 90% recycling within reasonable endeavours	NA	80%	-3%
Waste diversion (%)	100%	100%	On target ✓	100%	0%
Water consumption (total m <sup>3</sup> )	38,405 <sup>3</sup>	84,343	54%	88,782	-57%

<sup>1</sup> Revised carbon emissions according to the new reporting model. <sup>2</sup> Waste volumes have dropped by almost 50% due to COVID. This means that recycling rates have also been affected, but we continue to segregate where we can. <sup>3</sup> Revised water consumption according to the actual smart meter (AMR) data, which records actual use only (not waste water).





## Contact us



Contact Centre: **0345 600 0650**

The Customer Service Centre is available 7 days a week from 06:00 to 22:00 for comments and suggestions



**@sw\_help**

Tweet us 24 hours a day for a rapid response to your questions



**www.southwesternrailway.com** Keep up to date with service running information or contact us through our customer contact form on our website

### Got a question?

Simply click the 'Live Chat' button on our website or on the South Western Railway App

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 **Railway**