GET SOUTHEASTERN RAILWAY ON TRACK

PASSENGER DOSSIER
The Which? train survey is conducted annually via an independent poll of 7,415 members of the general public.

The survey asks about overall satisfaction over the last 12 months and also asks the likelihood to recommend the brand to a friend. The combination of these scores gives our customer ratings.

Passenger satisfaction with trains is low across the board, but people rarely complain to the operators. In our latest trains survey Southeastern scored 40% coming joint 18th out of 19.
GET SOUTHEASTERN RAILWAY ON TRACK

What Southeastern can do

1. Listen and respond to feedback to improve service for passengers. Specifically, to address: punctuality, information and crowding.

2. Provide passengers with the mechanism to feedback online and ensure this is easy to find from outside the Southeastern site.

3. Make sure that the escalation process for dealing with complaints is clearly referenced when asking for passengers’ feedback.

4. Complaints raised via social media should be recorded the same as complaints raised by other means.
Passengers’ stories

This dossier provides a selection of the hundreds of consumer comments, positive and negative, that we have received since launching the campaign.

The satisfied passengers:

Passengers didn’t just share their complaints with our campaign, 12% of comments were positive stories praising the services of Southeastern. We want to work with you to make sure more of your passengers have positive stories to share, for one TOC 46% of comments we received were positive.

“As an off peak traveller using their services once/twice a month (usually Tonbridge to London) I am very satisfied with the service. Rolling stock is good, information good. Problems are mostly related to the Victorian infrastructure which is not their responsibility and they can do little about, Australian visitors have commented on the high standard of the trains and service.”

PAUL

“I have absolutely no complaints on any front. I’m not a commuter, and I do my best to avoid rush hours. Maybe that’s the key.”

MICHAEL

“I use Southeastern on average two times a week for journeys to and from London. Customarily, the trains are punctual and clean (save for litter left by anti-social travellers who have just vacated). By definition, the line in and out of Charing Cross is very difficult to run on account of the Borough Market bottleneck. I also find the service from Ebbsfleet to St Pancras quite superb. Well done, Southeastern.”

ROBERT

“I think they are pretty good. However, I mainly use them for pleasure. Generally very punctual and the only delays and cancellations are due to legitimate reasons (animals on the line, flooding, or fallen trees). Staff are courteous and helpful, rolling stock is clean. Good reliable service. Much better than local bus services which aren’t even fit for purpose.”

ROBERT

“I use the high speed service all of the time the trains are punctual they are clean and comfortable. I have no complaints.”

JEAN

“I am retired and travel during the off peak times. I have found the journeys to be surprisingly pleasant. Extremely good value since I am travelling Free with my Freedom Pass.”

RENE

“I think the trains I travel on are much cleaner and more punctual than in the past. I’ve been commuting on the same line for over 40 years. The distant past say 30 years ago was infinitely worse than now.”

JOHN

“Despite the bad press I have never had a bad journey with Southeastern.”

RUSSELL
The satisfied passengers:

- “I have no issues with this rail company as I use the service purely for days out/weekends away. My personal experience is that trains are always punctual and I have encountered very few problems over the years that I have used this service.”
  YVONNE

- “As a pensioners traveling off-peak from Orpington to London Charing Cross, we often reflect on how fortunate we are to have such a reliable, comfortable, punctual and frequent service.”
  BILL

- “Latest experience was, I left hand luggage on a train at Victoria where an alert inspector noticed and ran after me on the platform. I was very thankful. It contained everything I needed to fly to France. So not all is bad on Southeastern.”
  FREDERICK

- “Very good - punctuality good, always get a seat. HOWEVER I travel to hospital appointments only and usually travel off-peak. No experience of peak travel, thank goodness!”
  ROBERT

- “I travelled daily to London and back from Orpington for over 40 years. My last journey was today. On a general basis, I found the service efficient and the trains clean. Given that they run a huge number of trains into a small junction at London Bridge, I’m amazed that more trains aren’t late.”
  DEREK

- “The joys of a super fast journey to London on the high speed rail line. Also, most importantly, as I’m disabled and on two sticks, I found it very difficult one day to cope at Gravesend station when they re-platformed the next London train, which I had to catch. The stairs up presented an enormous challenge to me, but a porter at the station helped me up and down the two sets of stairs, holding up the train until I was safely seated. A real gent, and one well worth praising.”
  DIANE

- “I find Southeastern trains consistently clean, comfortable, and on-time. When they’re not on-time they send me an email in advance to tell me when and why. I travel to London everyday and have done for 25 years and while my fares of gone up substantially during this time, I have been around long enough to see the benefit and the value. I can’t really fault Southeastern, and I think they do a good job in difficult circumstances.”
  SIMON

- “Generally works well but I normally travel off peak.”
  RICHARD

- “I travel fairly regularly on the Southeastern route Dover to London. Overall I have always been satisfied with the service. However, I do not travel at rush hour periods.”
  DOREEN

- “I commute daily on Southeastern and have done so for the past 21 years. I really don’t find the service too bad and very much better than five years ago.”
  CAROLINE

- “I only travel off peak and find the service excellent and punctual.”
  ROBIN
23% of comments related to passengers onboard experience. Crowding was a top issue across for passengers of many train operating companies, with Which? receiving complaints of packed trains or, in some cases, of people not even being able to get on at all. On their last journey with Southeastern 10% reported they had to stand.

CROWDING

- “I have had to use Southeastern to commute to and from work for the past 20 years and I have only seen a deterioration in services and actual travel experience. A reduction in the number of carriages on train services over the years has resulted in people having to travel packed in like sardines, without seats and in uncomfortably hot and sweaty conditions when the weather is warm/hot.”
  
  PAULA

- “When I used trains to get to and from work I found them dirty and massively over-crowded. I was lucky to get a seat - and still it’s a problem if one tries to travel at rush hour.”
  
  JILL

- “Although the service on the trains I travel on (Herne Hill - London Victoria on the Orpington Line) has usually been OK, my main dissatisfaction is with the schedule itself. Although this provides for 4 trains an hour for much of the day, I cannot work out why we only get two to four coach trains an hour during the evenings and for much of the weekends, even though these trains are often absolutely full, with people even having to stand. People living in neighbouring districts of south London seem to get more frequent services and longer trains, especially if they are close to the London Underground. Why do people in our area get a second rate schedule?”
  
  BRIAN

- “My husband, age 83 and awaiting a hip replacement, having to stand from Waterloo East to Sevenoaks, a period of about 40-45 minutes, most of my journey to Paddock Wood.”
  
  JUNE

- “I only travel on Southeastern for leisure mainly at the weekends The trains can get a bit crowded due to having only eight carriages they used to have ten.”
  
  ROBIN

- “Travelling off peak I never have a problem finding a seat and generally the carriages are clean. In the rush hour it can be very hard to find a seat and over-crowding can be a serious problem. Having to stand for over half an hour makes the cost of travel very expensive. That said the behaviour of the travelling public leaves much to be desired!”
  
  IAN

- “Dreadful, carriages are routinely overfull, and it is very difficult to get a seat on this train service. This is an everyday occurrence, not good enough southeastern.”
  
  KELLY
The onboard experience:

- "Why do most trains consist of only three carriages? This shows such a lack of respect for their customers. Why would anyone want to have to stand on a moving train on their journey? Paying passengers should be given a seat. Put on enough rolling stock to take the amount of paying customers."
  
  **TERRY**

- "My main complaint is that the actual number of coaches on a train bears no relationship to the number of people travelling on the train. eg late night trains, when people are coming home from the WEST end of London often have only four coaches leaving many people standing for the whole of their journey. Sometimes this is worst than the rush hour."
  
  **DONALD**

- "I have recently retired, so the daily horror of the commute to Charing Cross and back is finally over. I don’t remember ever getting a seat in the years I used the service. In the summer the trains would be horrendous I believe cattle are not allowed to travel in the heat commuters are expected to withstand."
  
  **RICHARD**

- "Before retirement (three years ago) my experience of Southeastern was pretty good. Fairly clean (room for improvement) and reasonably punctual. But timetable changes and less seats on new stock had increased the numbers standing, which was uncomfortable and poor value. Post-retirement, I can use the fast trains to London on my Freedom Pass - brilliant service."

  **P.S.: London Bridge Station has always been disorganised!**

  **TERRY**

- "Appalling. They are continually cutting down the carriages in the morning at peak times and also in the evening. I nearly passed out last night on the train as it was so crowded"
  
  **CATHERINE**

- "Always packed with as many standing as seated. That’s when it’s not cancelled or short formed. Short trains are a scandal. Often results in it being so packed it is impossible to get on but this doesn’t count as a delay or cancellation and is not reflected in service stats."
  
  **SUSAN**

- "Once every two weeks my journey will be impacted by carriages being removed from service leaving the same amount of people to travel on less carriages. This upsets passengers and causes unrest."
  
  **ALAN**

- "Overall the reliability is good. However my main gripe is the lack of seating at peak times plus comfort. When I started working for BR back in the 60’s, foreign travellers often asked if our second class was indeed second class as they thought it superior to their own. However, since the old rolling stock was replaced many years ago the position has reversed. Firstly the seats are not wide enough for the average person and they are most uncomfortable."
  
  **JEFFREY**

- "I commute into work every day from Lee to Charing Cross station. The train is always packed - regularly we are crammed together like sardines, standing room only - that I very rarely get a seat. I can count on one hand the number of times that has happened. Even now, when I am nearly nine months pregnant, no one has ever offered me a seat and I am too embarrassed to make a fuss when everyone is squashed together in boiling hot, uncomfortable conditions. For what I pay each month in train fare, I expect better..."
The onboard experience:

- “The morning commuting trains are absolutely cram full, never on time - as never know which train that turns up is going to the right destination i.e. Cannon Street or Charing Cross.”
  **SIMON**

- “Travel on their trains with variations for time of day, school holidays etc.

  Why then do they not use this data to make their service match the demand?”
  **CHRIS**

- “My ticket costs £4954.00 pa. I rarely get a seat and as my journey is only 17 minutes (the high speed train), I pay £1.11 per minute of each and every journey.

  When I started travelling I could always get a seat and the trains were on time and I told myself it was worth the extra money, but now it seems more people are having to pay for this service and the trains are getting fuller. If a train is 5 minutes late that’s a third of the total journey time and is getting more and more common.”
  **JULIE**

- “I am in the fortunate position of not having to pay for my ticket, being the possessor of a Freedom Pass but I feel very sorry for fellow passengers herded into dirty, stuffy trains with too few carriages and consequently too few seats. A journey at peak times is a Darwinian exercise in the survival of the fittest. The ‘cattle truck’ trains with the longer foyer space are particularly unpleasant. I have recently only stayed upright because of the pressure of other passengers. If veal calves were treated like this, there would be a campaign to end the franchise.”
  **MARGARET**

- “Awful, no seats, barely any room to even stand and mid journey people unable to get on trains. Animals would not be allowed to travel in these conditions, and certainly would not be expected to pay!”
  **TONI**

- “Only complaint is that when it is Sunday or Bank Holidays Southeastern (Orpington to Victoria) put on trains with only four carriages every 30 minutes instead of the usual eight carriages every 15 minutes. I don’t mind the less frequent service but four carriages can get very, very crowded causing standing only.”
  **FRANK**

- “The onboard experience: conditions on the train. I have not even gone into punctuality ... that is another massive problem.”
  **EMILY**
The onboard experience:

- “I travel regularly from West Dulwich to London Victoria. The trains in the morning rush hour this year are less punctual and are often delayed by a few minutes. This may not sound too bad however with the sheer volume of people travelling this can mean that you simply cannot get on the train as there are too many people waiting on the platform. My main concern is that too often, particularly at weekends the trains run at half the length which is very frustrating and as such they are woefully inadequate.”
  
  DAVID

- “While I appreciate the HS1 trains we have from the coast to London, they very often have only four or six carriages (presumably to save costs), and people travelling to London from Ashford, even at off-peak times, often have to stand all the way to London. Considering that we pay extra (about 30%?) to travel on HS1, wouldn’t a seat be a fairly basic advantage to expect? They could also speed up the upgrading of the line between Ramsgate and Ashford, which is still too slow. Thanet, where I live, desperately needs a fast connection with London, as we are really out on a limb! The ticket office at Broadstairs is often shut from 12.15 midday ‘due to staff shortages’ - not acceptable, when the ticket machine screen is almost impossible to see in bright sunlight, and you can’t book for the following day! I could go on ...”
  
  MARGARET

- “The most annoying feature is crowded trains, and often few coaches for daytime off peak. Usually not possible to get a seat from London Eltham unless you board at the start station. Crowded even at 2pm for example.”
  
  DENNIS

OTHER ONBOARD STORIES

- “The number of on-board announcements on Southeastern is simply excruciating. Every time the train stops one is “welcomed” on board and subjected to a complete list of the stations the train will be stopping at. Most of these are pre-recorded but occasionally the conductor guard will make them and then play the recorded version immediately after. Allegedly this is because there are so many announcements they are afraid people will “switch off” to them so the guard does them in a different voice to get passengers attention. And do we really need a reminder to take our luggage with us every time the train stops?”
  
  JOHN

- “The refreshment trolley on board have never managed to supply soya milk, despite continued requests to do so. There are many people with dairy intolerance and the independent station cafe at Paddock Wood has been business-minded enough to supply soya milk so they always get our business.”
  
  JUNE
The onboard experience:

● “Travelling from South of Maidstone gives me the chance of three/four different services. The worst is from Maidstone East to Victoria (smelly, dirty old carriages). The best is from Staplehurst to Charing Cross (clean, comfortable and punctual). Both run by Southeastern. The former is a horrid experience; 10% at best. The latter easily gets a 90% satisfaction from me.”

  KEITH

● “I often will travel peak hours with Southeastern and often it is difficult to get a seat. I think they insult our intelligence to blame how people feel about the company is somehow related to work, it is related to fact, it is a disgrace that you pay so much and travel in poor conditions with trains that often seem to have delays, so it cannot be relied upon at all. The issue is about value for money, plain and simple and it doesn’t feel that way. It is also not a very good company at keeping passengers informed when things go wrong.”

  CHRIS

“"The carriages need thoroughly deodorising (they always contain a very strong body odour even when empty).”

VERONICA
Punctuality:

38% of comments were about punctuality.

While there are some factors, for example over-running engineering works and the weather, that are beyond the control of train operating companies, Network Rail estimate that train operating companies are responsible for around a third of delays. With fare prices increasing year on year, it is not unreasonable that people expect to get a decent service.

“Out of the last three times I have travelled to London from the Bromley/Beckenham area, twice the train was cancelled. I must stress that on these occasions it was not due to weather conditions. The whole service is unreliable.”

CHRISTINE

“He only two stops away from the Starting point of my train to London yet the trains frequently arrive two or three minutes late. Not a long time but sufficient to make you miss transfers. I have also seen trains that were due to stop at my station pass through without stopping. This happens on days when there are delays on the line and in my view is simple to prevent passengers making claims. Southeastern have also removed seats from the trains so I now have to stand for my 35 minute journey, even late evenings when they often have only four car trains.”

DENIS

“Signals regularly fail somewhere along the lines which travel through Lewisham. This results in cancellations, late arrival at the station or late arrival at the destination because it is held in a queue.”

LAURENE

“Out of the last three times I have travelled to London from the Bromley/Beckenham area, twice the train was cancelled. I must stress that on these occasions it was not due to weather conditions. The whole service is unreliable.”

CHRISTINE

“When Southeastern took over the franchise their first action was to add three minutes to every journey. This increased their punctuality at the expense of 30 minutes extra travelling time for each passenger every week.”

STEVE

“Since the beginning of 2014 my train journey on a Saturday evening from Tunbridge Wells to London Bridge has been delayed twice because the driver has not turned up on time. On the first occasion, because we had waited for so long, they cancelled the train and asked the passengers to disembark and take the next train that arrived at the station.”

TAMARA
Punctuality:

- “On couple occasions the high speed train didn’t stop at my destination and only after we went past my stop the driver announced we would not be stopping there! Also the morning train left the station one minute before scheduled time thus I had to wait half an hour for another train and was late to work. More than once!”
  
  NADIA

- “There are so many frequent train cancellations in the morning mostly due to train failure. They don’t plan to have passengers to be ferried by the fast trains which pass through stations which have had trains cancelled yet these trains are almost empty.”
  
  ENNIAS

- “It’s astonishing the number of times I’ve climbed the steps at Cannon Street on my way home to find the concourse jammed because of some problem or another, polite staff (and all credit to them) guide me to take the DLR as far as I can. But it’s not just the journeys home, almost whenever I’m waiting for a train I hear ‘regret to announce’ message, it may be just be late running, but they do cancel a lot too. And they didn’t even begin to make an effort during the bad weather - Dartford or Slade Green to Cannon Street shouldn’t have been beyond them...”
  
  SIMON

- “If my train is on time these days it’s a miracle. The mornings are far worse than the evenings - every day starts miserably.”
  
  LAURA

- “I’m commuting from New Eltham to London Bridge. The Southeastern trains are always late or cancelled. Running really slow, what make the travel a nightmare. You never know if you’re going to get to work on time. Also the price of the ticket is really high. I had enough and for the last two weeks (since the strikes) I’m using my motorbike and I think I’ll keep using for the rest of the year.”
  
  FABIANO

- “I used Southeastern to go to work from Woolwich Arsenal to Cannon Street and during the weekend from Woolwich Arsenal to Charing Cross. Three out of five days the trains are delayed when not cancelled.”
  
  FERNANDO

- “My train is regularly 10 to 15 minutes late EVERY DAY - but that’s not enough to claim compensation. Must be 30+ minutes delay (on a 25 minutes journey!”
  
  SUSAN

- “£4,212 per annum to commute from Higham to London (after tax) and my wife pays the same. We both work in the public sector and could never afford to rent or buy in London so have to commute. Southeastern pays lip service to punctuality and for keeping passengers updated with often non-specific excuses for late running trains. Recently, not being able to get onboard staff has been an issue - so why not have a rota to cover such an eventuality please? Terrible service and a monopoly provider exploiting this fact. It does not deserve to have its franchise renewed. Delay/repay is not a decent sanction. Cash compensation would hopefully make Southeastern up its game. even its staff seem appalled by the service.”
  
  MARK
Punctuality:

● “Travelling most weekends down to Hastings from London Charing Cross in the last few months I have had to endure delays, impromptu bus replacements and a varying level of information. What I find most frustrating is that there appears to be no requirement on the train providers to be proactive on offering refunds when services are delayed or cancelled and also allowing you to travel alternative routes without incurring a charge. The latter is the case if I choose to travel back via Ashford International as the train from Ashford to London Kings Cross is the HS1 service that is not covered by a standard ticket.”

  PIERS

● “I normally try and catch the 07:16 from Bromley South non stop service to London Victoria, since the beginning of the year, I have only known it arrive at London Victoria on time once, it is always two to five minutes late depending on how long it waits outside Herne Hill.”

  CLIVE

● “Always full at my station - never get a seat, also, withdrew ‘straight through’ train and put on a two station shuttle to meet the ‘through’ trains. However, these are really overcrowded and if the train is delayed for any reason the shuttle leaves without you - even if you are walking across the bridge from one platform to another it will leave. This means either a 20 or 30 minute wait (peak or off peak) for a five minute end to end shuttle journey. They always claim punctuality targets but fail to realise the shuttle is to replace the through train and is meant to meet the passengers so surely the time isn’t the main criteria Q of S is !!! Ridiculous - if I could I would love to choose another service and not give them my money.”

  MARK

● “I am so many times disappointed by the unpunctuality of this trains. I wish the timetable were more reliable. I think that for the high prices that we customers pay, the service should be closer to perfection.”

  CELIA KARINA

● “Constant delays when travelling from Catford to Maidstone West. Worst was 4.6 hours and involved three changes all with unscheduled delays. These journeys were all on sunday afternoons over the last year. Best journey time has been 2.2 hours for a distance of around 34 miles. A bicycle would be as quick and infinitely cheaper. I no longer use this service as a result.”

  PHILL

● “I commute every day from Chelsfield to London Bridge. According to my definition of ‘on time’ (that is arriving at my destination within the minute that the timetable says) I think my train has been on time once so far this year and I think since October 2013. “

  LAUREN

● “The trains are always really late and often do not have enough carriages.”

  LEWIS

● “I moved to Herne Bay from London in 2000. The journey at the time took 1hr 14 minutes. I now takes at least 1hr 25 minutes sometimes longer. This is progress in the 21st century is it?”

  BRUCE

● “The reasons for the delays vary, but the one which angers me is ‘it’s late due to the late running of an earlier service’. That’s not a good enough reason. What I want to know is why the earlier one was late, what they are doing to put things right and what they are doing to stop it happening again in future. The display signs also wind me up. It says the train has arrived well before the train is even in sight. Also, the number of
minutes late is not an accurate reflection of the situation. It feels like I’m being lied to so that their stats aren’t so bad.”

LAUREN

“I have lived in Broadstairs for fours years. The first time I went to use the train at the local station on the 4th February this year the 10.11 train was late and the following train was cancelled. I subsequently missed my two following connections.”

DAVID

“I travel by train to London two or three times a week. I catch the 8.32 Cannon Street train from Orpington to London Bridge. The train is more or less on time at Orpington but it is anybody’s guess as to what time it gets to London Bridge. If we have a good run it might only be a couple of minutes late, but it is not unusual for it to be 10-15 minutes late for a journey that takes 28 minutes.”

LEONARD

“Pretty much everyday my arrival times are late in both directions.”

DAMON

“Terrible. I buy weekly tickets so am never eligible for a refund with late services.”

ALISON

“My friend has been wanting to visit us from Petts Wood and she usually comes by train but we have not seen her since before Christmas due to weekend engineering works and other events that mean the journey time is increased and involves many changes of transport. It looks like this will be an on going situation for months to come!!! She used to visit at least once a month.”

JANE

“I use South Eastern for my daily commute to work. The train arrives late almost every day, and it is usually more than 15 minutes late. I think it has only arrived on time once in the past month. It is a dreadful service that gets worse and worse.”

PHIL

“We constantly have to get a bus service on a weekend when we go to London due to engineering works, which is a total inconvenience as it is crowded and very slow and we never find out until we get to the station.”

JOHN
Punctuality:

- “Last two trips from London Victoria to Sittingbourne. One was cancelled because no driver and we had to wait another hour, the other was pot luck because it was the weekend and as per normal working on the line with bus connections. They seem to be getting worse plus the fact its so expensive now its nearly cheaper to go by car and pay the car parks and London Charge. It seems that as they increase the charges the service gets worse.”
  
  DAVID

- “Constant minor delays on early morning services into London with weak excuses that are usually caused by their other trains services running slowly or points failures. I arrive on schedule maybe one in five journeys on my commute from Herne Bay to London (and similar hit rate on return journeys).”
  
  LEE

- “Every week there are problems the trains are never on time or they are cancelled or have carriages missing. Now when there is a bit of rain or it’s windy they send out emails saying that the next days trains will be running at a reduced rate. I guess thats how they account for them not being on time. Yesterday morning the train arrived at Maidstone East and then the conductors door came off its hinges, the train was then cancelled. We pay £4000 a year to take the train, they also charge nearly £900 a year to let us park in the station. I cannot believe satisfaction was as high as 40%!”
  
  GLENN

- “Very poor. Cancel trains at the drop of a hat and run trains fast when running late missing out stations that only have one train per hour. On many occasions this happens train after train and results in waiting hours for a train no buses laid on.”
  
  SARAH

- “Southeastern have to be the worst train company in the history of train companies. Aside from their total failure to maintain a punctual service under the very best circumstances, the ticket prices are astronomical, the toilets are disgusting, the staff are rude, unhelpful and downright inflammatory at times, and the whole infrastructure collapses if a single leaf blows onto a track. I am currently commuting SIX HOURS a day to get around a series of landslides that occurred before Christmas. Whilst I understand they are not responsible for the weather, the alternatives put in place are woefully inadequate. I have had a week of work with stress and exhaustion due to this situation.”
  
  CAROL

- “UK’s most expensive and worst TOC is now hiding behind Network Rail during bad weather. No service at all on 27/12/13 and most recently barely any services before 11am on 15/02/14. Even worse affected TOCs don’t do this. Southeastern like to cancel services for at least half the day following a stormy night. Pathetic! Apart from that regular cancellations and short formations due to train faults, signal faults and unavailable staff.”
  
  JEFF

- “I am not surprised by Southeastern’s reaction to the survey, as explains why the service is so poor - they are not focused on their customers. Trains are consistently late. In fact, more than half of the trains I have caught into London in the past two months that have been delayed. Trains simply do not arrive on time. The service is terrible when delays are longer, with signs going up saying it is delayed or on time and then often after it was meant to arrive a message coming up saying delayed or cancelled. When there are severe delays trains change their destination and more than once I have been stranded at another station because a train has changed its journey. The trains themselves are nice and, I have to say, the service out of London, is often much
Punctuality:

better than the service in. Yes, there are often no seats, but I expect that being at relatively close to London on a commuter train. I would be fascinated by the punctuality statistics. Especially if this was offset against when people travel. I am sure the off peak trains are often on time!”

MARK

● “I’ve been logging my commute to and from work this year and the ratio of late:on time trains is 16:6. i.e. 16 late/cancelled trains and six on time.... this year only six trains out of 22 have been on time. Need I say more!!! Also the refund process is ridiculously slow and complex. I had to ring Southeastern trains and get a copy of my oyster usage emailed to me after a 24 hour wait.”

BRUCE

● “Uncomfortable, unpunctual and hugely expensive. Yet no one is able to challenge the privatised rail companies to answer for sky high fares and poor service.”

PAUL

● “Really terrible punctuality (I think the train has arrived on time at its destination in the morning once so far this calendar year. It is often late by 10 minutes, for a journey of 19 minutes. There is almost never a satisfactory excuse given, usually just blaming ‘congestion’ or ‘late running previous services’) Trains are almost always heavily overcrowded and the seats are too small for an adult human.”

COLIN

● “I avoid traveling with Southeastern at any cost, my experience is nearly every rush hour train is overcrowded to the point of being squeezed in - regularly late - on average one to two of my 10 to work and back journeys per week - the price to travel in London full stop is just dreadful value for money.”

MARTIN

● “Constant delays and cancellations. I’ve been commuting into London using Southeastern Railway for five years now, in that time there hasn’t been a working week where there has not been at least one problem on the network. The compensation policy is based on journeys delayed by over 30 minutes, but the regular delays are often 15-20 minutes late - obviously not making a difference to Southeastern, but to an employee needing to get to work or home to pick up my daughter from nursery, it can make all the difference.

What is most galling is the constantly increasing fares. Apparently many of the issues that cause the cancellations are due to Network Rail. Why then are we forced to pay increasing amounts to Southeastern in order for them to improve their service. If the problems are outside of their control (tracks, signals and as I understand they don’t have control on when they get new rolling stock), then what is it paying for? Maybe the money should be going Network Rail instead?”

ANDREW

● “Every week my train has been late on route to work or on my return from work.”

STEPHEN

● “My trains with Southeastern are often delayed if not cancelled, but what frustrates me is the complete lack of communication from staff.

Often trains will stop mid journey for five to ten minutes yet we get no updates from drivers. Staff on platforms never know why the delays have happened and can’t shed any light on an ETA. Why can’t they communicate? Passengers deserve to know what isn’t working and why.
Also any complaints are often responded to with unsatisfactory replies which are essentially ‘we are trying, it’s not our fault’. No responsibility is taken or recognition that their performance is bad. And why are their own in-house satisfaction surveys so high? I’d be interested to see who they ask and when, certainly no commuter would fill it in favourably, and I as a commuter have never been asked to fill one in.

Just this week I wanted to get the elephant and castle 17:29 service to Bromley South, an 18 minutes journey. Thanks to ‘signalling issues’ we didn’t get to Bromley until 18:30. Standing on a freezing platform waiting for this train, listening to the announcer on the PA offer no info, I wonder where on earth all my fares go. Fares take up such a big chunk of my wages, yet services have been terrible lately. It’s frustrating to pay so much for such unreliable services.”

EMMA

“Carriages are always extremely overcrowded and I’ve seen four people faint (whilst standing) in the 18 months I’ve been using the service. Customer service is very poor. The station staff plead ignorance, saying they know nothing of delays and have no means to find out.

Contacting their complaints team just results in them passing on the blame to Network Rail. I suspect if you changed your survey methodology to poll regular commuters only, you’d find satisfaction levels far lower than 40%.”

SAM

“Punctuality:

Also any complaints are often responded to with unsatisfactory replies which are essentially ‘we are trying, it’s not our fault’. No responsibility is taken or recognition that their performance is bad. And why are their own in-house satisfaction surveys so high? I’d be interested to see who they ask and when, certainly no commuter would fill it in favourably, and I as a commuter have never been asked to fill one in.

Just this week I wanted to get the elephant and castle 17:29 service to Bromley South, an 18 minutes journey. Thanks to ‘signalling issues’ we didn’t get to Bromley until 18:30. Standing on a freezing platform waiting for this train, listening to the announcer on the PA offer no info, I wonder where on earth all my fares go. Fares take up such a big chunk of my wages, yet services have been terrible lately. It’s frustrating to pay so much for such unreliable services.”

EMMA

“"My experience is not great, and it’s consistently this way! I commute daily between Westcombe Park and London Bridge. Trains are *mostly* on time at Westcombe Park (apart from the occasional cancellation, for which a reason is never given). But a 12 minute scheduled journey pretty much always takes 25 minutes. The return journey is far worse and is always late.

Carriages are always extremely overcrowded and I’ve seen four people faint (whilst standing) in the 18 months I’ve been using the service. Customer service is very poor. The station staff plead ignorance, saying they know nothing of delays and have no means to find out.

Contacting their complaints team just results in them passing on the blame to Network Rail. I suspect if you changed your survey methodology to poll regular commuters only, you’d find satisfaction levels far lower than 40%.”

SAM

“Punctuality:

Also any complaints are often responded to with unsatisfactory replies which are essentially ‘we are trying, it’s not our fault’. No responsibility is taken or recognition that their performance is bad. And why are their own in-house satisfaction surveys so high? I’d be interested to see who they ask and when, certainly no commuter would fill it in favourably, and I as a commuter have never been asked to fill one in.

Just this week I wanted to get the elephant and castle 17:29 service to Bromley South, an 18 minutes journey. Thanks to ‘signalling issues’ we didn’t get to Bromley until 18:30. Standing on a freezing platform waiting for this train, listening to the announcer on the PA offer no info, I wonder where on earth all my fares go. Fares take up such a big chunk of my wages, yet services have been terrible lately. It’s frustrating to pay so much for such unreliable services.”

EMMA

“"My experience is not great, and it’s consistently this way! I commute daily between Westcombe Park and London Bridge. Trains are *mostly* on time at Westcombe Park (apart from the occasional cancellation, for which a reason is never given). But a 12 minute scheduled journey pretty much always takes 25 minutes. The return journey is far worse and is always late.

Carriages are always extremely overcrowded and I’ve seen four people faint (whilst standing) in the 18 months I’ve been using the service. Customer service is very poor. The station staff plead ignorance, saying they know nothing of delays and have no means to find out.

Contacting their complaints team just results in them passing on the blame to Network Rail. I suspect if you changed your survey methodology to poll regular commuters only, you’d find satisfaction levels far lower than 40%.”

SAM
Communication:

18% of comments related to communication.

Numerous passengers told us that simply not knowing what was going on was more frustrating than the delay itself. And although our research found few people do complain, those who do are often left dissatisfied with the process.

INFORMATION

● “Fortunately there isn’t serious disruption on my route very often, but when things go wrong, Southeastern do a poor job of getting things back on track. One of the worst things is that trains appear on the boards delayed with no indication of when the train might be and none of the staff know anything.”
  
  DAVID

● “There is simply no information about problems at smaller stations where there are rarely railway personnel. The information phones are totally useless. Trains are often labelled late then after you have waited they are suddenly cancelled. This often happens, at any time of day and seems to be due to a wide variety of reasons. I have used the trains a lot for work and leisure in recent years and the situation has always remained the same.”
  
  SANDRA

“Unreliable with absence of accurate information.”

BRIAN

● “I commute daily from Kent into London Bridge/Cannon Street on Southeastern. Areas where I think Southeastern could improve on is communications and information. My annoyance with them, even if it is not their fault, is the inconsistency with the delivery of information. Sometimes too much useless or unhelpful information (eg “delays were caused by earlier disruption” = delays are caused by delays!) or none at all. There is no excuse for that. compare that with London Underground where the driver is trained to give out reassuring messages whenever a train is stopped unexpectedly for about a minute or more. Southeastern it can be done. Training and behaviour change can be effective.”
  
  DAVID

● “Southeastern run a totally unreliable service. I attended their ‘Meet the Managers’ session at Cannon Street station last year. I was appalled at their attitude. They simply mocked and laughed at the passengers. These are genuine comments made by their senior management directly to myself in response to questions and complaints: If you don’t like our service get a bus” followed by “If you don’t like our franchise you shouldn’t have let Thatcher win an election” Other equally mocking comments were used to field questions accompanied by braying laughter.”
  
  ANTONY

● “Due to high winds the line was closed between Dover and Deal, no information was given on the train, on arriving at Dover there were no alternative way of getting home, bus services finished by 6.15pm and the rail company did not lay on a bus service as it wasn’t their fault and no refund of fare was offered.”
  
  JULIE

● “The employees cannot give consistent information. I have two e mail responses regarding kids for a quid each giving conflicting advice.”
  
  CAROL
Communication:

- “I was sold an off peak ticket to travel from Ashford International to London Victoria. The 10.30 train was cancelled and I was told that the 10.47 would run. It transpired that the 10.47 did not run because of a problem on the rails and I then discovered that staff had been aware of this problem since 7am that day and yet sold me the ticket without informing me. Southeastern provided a coach from Ashford International to Maidstone where I eventually caught a connection arriving at Victoria almost two hours late. Had they told me when I bought the ticket I would have made alternative arrangements. Needless to say I am very unhappy with Southeastern and their apparent disregard for their paying passengers.”
  KEITH

- “We arrived at Eden Park station last Saturday to find the station unmanned and only information about the trains out of London. I rang the helpline and was told that there would be a train at 14.13 hours to Lewisham and I would have to change there for London. In the event, one arrived on time but went all the way to Canon Street. How can one make appropriate decisions with inaccurate information?”
  MAUREEN

- “Never anyone at station to take money for tickets, you have to use machine which I do not like using as I cant see well, have lost money in machine before and when I spoke to someone about it they said they would check machine totals at the end of the day and if is was wrong I would get my money back. They called and said machine was correct but how could it have been when it kept my 20 pounds?”
  KATHY

- “Communication is very poor, often misleading, wrong or simply not there. I am regularly left wondering if I am going to be able to get home or have to sleep at the station.”
  SUSAN

- “If anything goes wrong the flow of information is very poor. The staff don’t seem to know what is going on and the information to passengers is poor. Add in trains which are showing a high degree of wear and tear and some staff with poor attitudes, then you have a recipe for a very poor service.”
  MARK

- “Checking on line to make sure the trains were running on time during the recent bad weather and being informed they were, only to find out that when we got to the station there was only a skeleton service and that the on-line train service that we had looked at was nothing to do with them, even though Southeastern were endorsing the site. Also, train times being advertised on electronic boards that were in fact cancelled and when asking platform staff about information, they just shrug their shoulders and say they don’t know.”
  MARTIN
Communication:

● “Fire on the line at Woolwich Dockyard. No mention of this when standing on Waterloo East station. Board shows train running as normal. Get on the train, no announcement to say we are on diversion. Train diverts to another line and when I talk to other passengers I find out the fire was over two hours earlier and the diversion was planned. Have no idea where to get off, how to get home. Get off at a station recommended by another passenger but no staff at the station to tell us where to go. Annoying but so many experiences of this type on Southeastern. Easily the worst train company ever.”

WAYNE

● “I’ve been commuting now for 15 years. Progressively customer service, punctuality and onboard experience have improved year on year, and I think that Southeastern from my station is fine. My only complaint with my commute is the meltdown that occurs with communication every something significant goes wrong, but all you do in those situations is go and do something different instead, and leave other people to stress at the stations.”

PHIL

● “On Wednesday 5th March, my train was delayed because of a broken down train further up the line. I finally got to London 56 minutes late. I subscribe to e-mail alerts and during a total journey time of two hours 15 minutes for a 50 mile journey, I received close to 40 alert emails (happy to share if you’re interested). Some of these were just downright ridiculous. At one point, I got the following alert: “UPDATE: The 06:58 will be delayed after leaving by about 938 minutes due to a broken down train.” I can only assume that this was the train that had broken down but the e-mail alert is obviously totally ridiculous. This I think sums up Southeastern’s attitude towards its customers and their commitment to providing accurate and timely information. On another occasion I noted the following tweet: “flood: trains through Sevenoaks and Kentish Tn via Brighton via Catford subject to alt & canc #southeastern http://t.co/jinbnDPXAC”. Again meanness computer-generated gibberish!”

GEOFF

● “It has always been bad but now its ridiculous. Two trains cancelled as they had broken down. Next train wasn’t stopping but going straight through to Cannon St and not stopping at London Bridge. Even my Maze Hill station didn’t know what was going on ...... next train was stopping at Greenwich where I was told to get off and get on another train to London Bridge. Got off - no one there knew what was going on. Eventually train came and as usual had to stand all the way! Trains overcrowded. My ten to 15 minutes journey took one and a half hours!”

BARBARA

● “The ticket machine at Folkestone West Station, which has only been installed in the last year, sells first class tickets on the high speed train, where there is no first class section, but does not sell open saver returns, only day returns. The saver return, valid for a month costs barely more than a pound more than the off peak single so is good value for the passenger. When the ticket office is shut (for a month at the moment, and after 11am normally) to save £24 on the return journey to London you have to board the train without a ticket and risk a huge fine. Luckily the staff on board are great and understand the idiocies of the system, but should they have to make up for the ‘mistakes’ on the machines. It’s difficult not to think that only selling expensive tickets at the machines is being done deliberately so people who don’t know the system pay more than they should for their travel?”

MARY
Communication:

- “I regularly travel from Woolwich Arsenal to Central London. When the trains are late, there is often no one to ask when they might arrive and the station info is often wrong. Also if you find someone they are often abrupt and don’t know the situation. The guys in the ticket office say it is nothing to do with them. On trains travelling out to Kent, the trains are sometimes diverted and so don’t go through Woolwich - this happened again last week. That means we have to get a bus instead.”
  **JOSEPH**

- “Generally when trains are late, the staff at Sidcup have little knowledge of what is going on and when trains will be running. The electronic notice boards will always say trains are still running when they’re obviously not, which adds further confusion. It is a simple case of proactive communication required on Southeastern’s part, which would then at least keep the commuters up to date with what is happening (alternative arrangements, possibly, could then be made). Inevitably when the trains do arrive they are then over crowded, full to the rafters with disgruntled passengers. On arrival at London a simple announcement apologising for the inconvenience is all you get. As I said at the outset this is Southeastern’s standard approach to any type of problem. Kind regards.”
  **PATRICK**

- “I moved to Kent from Essex just over a year ago. I used to travel from Bishops Storford (Stansted Express) which was fast, clean, good service. To be fair my commute now is not too bad on the whole, but I find when it goes wrong it really goes wrong. There never seems to be any information given on the problems. There seems to be three types of carriage, with only one I would say comfortable (especially as it is quite a long journey) the ticket office is often found closed at Marden and the staff at London Bridge all seem very rude and unhelpful, but I think the conductors that travel on the trains to be quite pleasant and polite.”
  **STEVEN**

- “The ticket office attendance is unreliable. Delay announcements are not kept up to date. Trains are normally punctual when running. I have made written and verbal complaints regarding Meopham station but nothing changed. Radio Kent does not receive up to date information.”
  **KEITH**

- “A few weeks ago my family and me travelled to London from Gravesend to visit family. It was a Sunday, so (as there often is) there was a bus replacement service between Gravesend and Dartford. On the way home, as we arrived at Dartford we could see a bus outside the fact that one is forced to travel at peak times on journeys that would normally be made after 10:00. Information about services and in particular, alternative routes one can take, is abysmal. Parking spaces set aside for passengers driving to other major stations en route (Tonbridge & Tunbridge Wells) are totally inadequate. I believe the arrangement at Tonbridge is or was for 70 cars. Southeastern clearly believe that travelling on their trains is some kind if hobby that passengers choose to indulge in if they have the time or the money. Their lack of organisational ability is astounding. On Feb 3, the day of one of the most recent landslides they were unable to give their staff up to the minute information on whether they were or weren’t running a shuttle service from Tunbridge Wells or a bus service. They appear to have no functional contingency plans for any emergency. Southeastern is a derisory rail company.”
  **STEPHEN**

- “I use the Hastings-London line or rather I don’t at the moment. Because of the landslides Southeastern trains are taking approximately an hour longer than normal, however, they haven’t changed the fare structure to reflect the fact that one is forced to travel at peak times on journeys that would normally be made after 10:00. Information about services and in particular, alternative routes one can take, is abysmal. Parking spaces set aside for passengers driving to other major stations en route (Tonbridge & Tunbridge Wells) are totally inadequate. I believe the arrangement at Tonbridge is or was for 70 cars. Southeastern clearly believe that travelling on their trains is some kind if hobby that passengers choose to indulge in if they have the time or the money. Their lack of organisational ability is astounding. On Feb 3, the day of one of the most recent landslides they were unable to give their staff up to the minute information on whether they were or weren’t running a shuttle service from Tunbridge Wells or a bus service. They appear to have no functional contingency plans for any emergency. Southeastern is a derisory rail company.”
  **STEPHEN**
Communication:

station, but by the time we reached the bus stop it had gone. It was dark and freezing cold, and there was no-one around (either inside the station, or outside) to ask about bus times, and we were unable to stand inside the station as the bus stop is not visible from there. So we had to wait in the freezing cold for 25 minutes for the bus, and during this time five buses arrived from Gravesend but did not leave. Incidentally, when we had caught the bus at Gravesend in the morning there was a very helpful man with a clipboard and timetable. We accept that rail works are necessary, but leaving the passengers with no information like this is totally unacceptable.”

RACHEL

“I was travelling from home from work one evening, having arrived at London Waterloo East, the trains were delayed and there were platform alterations without no announcements and there were a lot of passengers that were having to ask the train driver where the train was going!!! I think this is extremely unsatisfactory, appalling customer service and no announcements over the tannoy. Where are the staff, when you need them?”

LISA

“January, going home to visit family, train terminated at Tunbridge Wells (I was aiming quite a few miles further south - St Leonards). There was no bus replacement service, as had been promised by the conductor, up to an hour after we had arrived and there were no announcements to passengers about how the bus replacement - everyone had to sit around on the floor and seemingly wait indefinitely. We absolutely had to get home so paid £100 for a taxi (new years day so prices were doubled). I accept that this was caused by weather, but the lack of communication and confusion for customers was the fault of Southeastern.”

JAMIE

“The biggest problem with Southeastern for me isn’t late running trains, cancellations, overcrowding, short-formed services, prices, filthy carriages etc. All that drives me insane but after years of suffering you just get used to it. I leave for work and catch a train that leaves 20 minutes earlier than the one I would need if services ran on time, and I’m still late at least two days a week.

My biggest complaint is the total failure to communicate with customers. The minute there is a problem, you can’t find a member of staff as they clear the platforms. If you do manage to find one, they know nothing. There are rarely announcements in the regular event of the system having a meltdown and when there is, invariably the information given is completely wrong. Station staff are given nothing so end up hiding away when there’s a problem, to avoid irate customers.

And then when called to account for their appalling service, the excuses come out. Usually it is the fault of Network Rail, but today it turns out it is because I hate my job. Worst service I have ever experienced on a train.”

PENNY
Communication:

COMPLAINTS HANDLING

- “I have repeatedly complained to Southeastern regarding smoking on their trains at many stations. At times I have approached both station staff and ticket enforcement officers and they refuse to help me. I have contacted Train Watch and my MP to no use whatsoever, indeed they seem only intent on backing each other up. The station staff, when they are not useless are aggressive and extremely rude. Especially at Charing Cross.”

  ROBERT

- “I have little choice in using Southeastern on my daily commute to and from work and honestly find their attitude shocking in most respects. They have my money from my early travel card and now could not care any less. There is no point in complaining as when you do it seems to go over their heads so I have given up.”

  LINE

- “Southeastern trains have a culture of lateness and cancellations - sometimes at a moment’s notice. This makes them unreliable. Over the years (since 2003) I have made numerous complaints but there have been no significant change. They do however increase their fares significantly every year making them both expensive and unreliable.”

  OLGA

- “I have had to use Southeastern to commute to and from work for the past 20 years and I have only seen a deterioration in services and actual travel experience. A reduction in the number of carriages on train services over the years has resulted in people having to travel packed in like sardines, without seats and in uncomfortably hot and sweaty conditions when the weather is warm/hot.”

  PAULA
Ticketing:

Many passengers are confused by over-complicated ticketing systems and frustrated by ticket machines. 8% commented about tickets.

- “I bought a travelcard from a Southeastern ticket collector on the train, (because the ticket office only opens briefly weekday mornings at this station); it included tubes and buses. The card failed to open any/every barrier I tried to go through. I have reported this to the rail company and am awaiting a response. This problem is a real nuisance and inconvenience, since everywhere is so busy with queues of people behind you, moving so fast. You have to reverse and find the attended barrier, so it also slowed down my own journey as well as others.”
  LESLEY

- “Travelled with two grandsons, six and four, and were charged for the older one. Why? When they can travel on Tubes and buses for free? From the minute children turn five they have to pay to travel on Southeastern.”
  JOY

- “Overly complex ticket purchasing made me chose a more expensive ticket for a family day out.”
  ANDREW

- “They mostly only have one ticket seller on duty which means long waits when that person, quite rightly, needs a lunch, a tea break or a call of nature. As we are not in the centre of London many customers are waiting for info and tickets on non-straightforward and often very complicated travel arrangements (often in advance of their trip). Everyone’s wait in line at the ticket office (often for it just to reopen) is made more miserable by standing in the freezing cold, windy area in which it is situated. Despite a station ‘refurb’ (around the time of UK Olympics) the huge automatic glass doors have not worked and therefore are never closed! We are told they don’t work, but they must need to close them when they close the station! This is Folkestone Central - a very busy station.”
  GISELA

- “In September 2012 I was arrested for not having a ticket for travelling from New Eltham to Dartford despite my oyster card. They said the appeal arbiter was independent but it is the same company. It took ages to drop the charges after I proved I always had the intention of paying and with photographic evidence they do not warn you they have no oyster card readers at their stations despite Oyster cards being valid in zones one to nine.”
  RUSS

- “Southeastern trains seem to run ok and the high-speed service is good. I have used it occasionally for commuting to work and for leisurely travel. My only and main complaint would be the excessively high ticket prices which are way over the top, costing me almost £40 to commute to/from work per day (compared with £17 by car) and costing far too much for a family trip to London.”
  RICHARD
**Ticketing:**

- “The ticket office at the station I get on at claims to be open from 05.50 to 09.15, Monday to Friday and never is open. I have to purchase my weekly ticket on my fathers credit card to get to work in London. On the train I cannot use the card so I’m forced to pay a daily ticket on my card which is nearly £40 a day. I’ve only just had a response after having to send constant reminders. They’ve only just got back to me to say they’re investigating the situation.”

  **HOLLIE**

- “Extremely poor. Southeastern failed to notify passengers via its website or SMS of train cancellations due to snow. It blamed this on National Rail, which said Southeastern never notified of the cancellations. I was promised a ticket refund - after ten phone calls, ten promises were never kept - I was never refunded for the advance payment ticket. I wrote to my MP who also looked into it but Southeastern never came through for anyone. It neglects its responsibilities and its customers. Its online system for purchasing tickets is a near disaster - one ends up either paying more than needed, or purchasing tickets that are not valid. A major overhaul is required.”

  **PATRICIA**

- “My annual fare on Southeastern from West Wickham into London has gone up by 220% over the 15 years I have been living here, that’s around a 5.5% compound increase each year. At the same time the service offered has deteriorated with less trains and particularly less stopping at London Bridge in rush-hour. How can that possibly be justified. Even just looking at inflation rates this is completely out of sync. Trains are often dirty and in a state of poor repair and currently engineering work is causing havoc at weekends and late night. Southeastern? Not a fan and sun shining would not make a lot of difference.”

  **PAUL**

- “Thankfully I do not now need to use Southeastern or any UK train company much now as my company now allow me to work from home. I have lived in Europe and payed half the costs I pay in the UK for a much better service faster cleaner trains and governments that run the railway for the people not for shareholders!!

  The current Government and all previous should hold their heads in shame at how expensive it has become to travel on our third rate rail network which is so far behind many countries in Europe. It is a national disgrace that they are allowed to charge so much etc. As I said thankfully I don’t have to do this everyday and don’t have to pay these disgusting fares!”

  **SIMON**

- “We pay a huge amount of money for a service which is always overcrowded and rarely runs on time. I usually get the 08.12 from Sevenoaks every day and so far this week alone it has not been on time once. I’ve had incidents where the train has been so packed myself and friends have fainted from having to stand up the whole way with little breathing space and although not so common, there have even been times when its so packed you can’t even get on the train and have to wait for the next one.

  I pay nearly £400 per month for my train ticket which for someone who is a junior in their profession, this takes up a large chunk of my salary. If the prices were lower I wouldn’t mind the issue of rarely getting a seat. Although the rush-hour service does need to be more prompt! More carriages would help the overcrowding too.”

  **SUZI**
Ticketing:

“...My son bought a ticket at 17.26 only to be told, after he’d bought the ticket and from the same person, that there were no trains running up to London Bridge. He had a dreadful journey, didn’t even reach his destination and ended up getting a taxi home from Lewisham at about 21.30 having been to Victoria, on several buses and standing on stations where trains are showing on boards but do not appear. I put in a delay repay claim and got 85p in compensation - an absolute insult. After four months of correspondence, I eventually got the full refund (including taxi fare) with the help of Passenger Focus. If they’d refunded the full cost of ticket in the first place I may not have pursued the taxi fare.”

JILL
Conclusion
The responses we’ve received - and support for our Get Trains On Track campaign - only provide a snapshot of passengers’ concerns about their daily rail journeys. However, the sample of comments provided underlines how strongly passengers feel about these issues and why we’d encourage you to respond.

What Southern can do now
Outline to us how you will address our findings by sharing the actions you intend to take over the coming year to improve passenger satisfaction; in particular how you will pro-actively encourage, listen to and respond to feedback, improving services for customers.

How we can help
We can share your plans directly with our members and supporters, as well as working with you on the details of changes, helping to announce those changes and supporting your communication with current and future passengers.

For further details about the Get Trains On Track campaign visit: www.which.co.uk/trains