

Customer Information Pledges

Keeping you up to date when
travelling by train

April 2023



Smarter
Information
Smarter
Journeys



Information Pledges

Our world has never had access to so much information - and we know you need information when things go wrong when choosing to travel with us.

Together, our industry has agreed on information pledges that:

are supported by all train companies

explain what our commitments are and what we're doing to make things better

bring together good practice from across the rail and other industries to help you during disruption

allow for local and regional flexibility, whilst maintaining consistency

show that we truly care about you and we put our passengers first

In addition to the individual pledges, we commit to:

- measuring and publishing how well we deliver against them
- review them regularly to make sure that they continue to deliver what we intended
- providing an area on every train company, the National Rail and Network Rail's website which is dedicated to sharing how we manage service disruption

Always improving

We're always looking to do things better - and we want to keep improving your experience. You can find a summary of what we do and our plans for the future on your train company's website, along with the websites of National Rail Enquiries (nationalrail.co.uk) and Network Rail (networkrail.co.uk).

We respect your privacy

We are constantly developing tools that make things easier for you - but with so much information available, you may have a better experience if you register some basic journey and contact details with us, so we can filter information that is relevant to you.

If you share your information, we will:

- make it clear how we will use your information
- not use the information for anything other than what you agree to
- stop using your information if you tell us, at any time

Sharing some basic details helps us to make sure we only send you relevant and appropriate information. If you choose not to share your information, you will still be able to find all the information you need, it might just take a little bit longer for you to find what you need.



Image: Male passenger in a station looking at his phone



Helping you plan your journey...

A journey doesn't start at a railway station - it can start when you arrange a meeting with a colleague, when you start a new job or when you fancy a day out with family and friends.

It's good to plan...

Sometimes, Network Rail need to carry out improvement work (which keeps our network safe and makes it more reliable) or we might need to change the published timetable for other operational reasons. We work with Network Rail to agree and confirm any special timetables to cover this.

We normally plan things like this many months before they happen - if we need to change your train times, we will let you know as soon as we can.

To help you plan your journey, working with rail industry partners and retailers, we will:

- publish the changes in our journey planners as soon as possible - we aim to do this no later than 12 weeks in advance for planned works
- tell you in our journey planners if we have not yet confirmed the timetable and our normal timetable is still being shown
- widely communicate details of upcoming changes to train times, so you know to check before you travel
- provide a list of dates that are currently available for booking our Advance tickets on our website, so you don't need to worry that you'll miss out on any cheaper tickets that might become available
- let you know if you need to travel on a different mode of transport when you would normally expect it to be a train, when planning your journey
- run trains and road transport that is accessible for everyone. If this isn't possible, we will tell you and offer to arrange an alternative if you get in touch with us
- ensure replacement buses display their destination and depart from an identified departure point which is clearly shown
- share information about the facilities that are available at the stations you'll be using and highlight where there are any issues
- offer you the option to be notified if your train times change after you buy your ticket online



It's all about people...

The railway is all about people: we are people who work hard to help people just like you travel from A to B. We care about you. We care about your journey. We care when things go wrong.

Nobody likes it when things don't go to plan - but from time to time, it's inevitable that things can go wrong. We simply ask that you allow us the opportunity to put things right and treat our people with respect.

Our team members will:

- be happy to help and be visible so you know where to find them
- be the eyes and ears to help things run smoothly on the network - they will listen to any feedback you give and make sure it is recorded to help make things better in the future

- know what they need to do to resolve or report a problem
- know what to do to help you when you travel with us
- have access to technology (such as a mobile device) to enable them to get helpful information and share it with you
- be available at our staffed stations to give you information. At unstaffed stations, or if no staff are present, there will be a way of getting in touch with us and we will tell you about these on notices around the station

Image montage:
BTP assisting a passenger,
and pictures of station
concourses





What you can expect when travelling with us...

When you're at a station, we will:

- give you as much notice as possible about the platform your train will depart from. When we can't confirm the platform or there is a change to the platform, we will tell you as soon as we know
- keep you up-to-date on the status of your train
- keep announcements to a minimum, so you can easily pick out important information
- let you know if you need to travel in a particular part of the train for your journey - such as if you are travelling to a station which has a platform shorter than the length of the train, or if your train splits during the journey
- provide details about onward travel options - including connecting trains and any local public transport services that are available



Image: Kings Cross Station interior



Image: Young passenger looking out a train window

When you're on a train, we will:

- tell you as soon as we're aware that your train may be disrupted
- let you know about the stations the train will stop at and let you know we are approaching the next station, to give you time to get ready to leave the train
- let you know the destination of the train (on the front and/or side of the train) and the stations the train will call at (on internal displays, where fitted)
- announce if the train stops unexpectedly between stations or will be late departing a station, so you know what is happening
- make an announcement when there are changes to the stations that the train will be stopping at
- Where we can, let you know of any disruption on other routes that your train connects with, which may affect your onward journey



When things go wrong...

As soon as we are aware of a problem affecting your journey, we will:

- update our digital information channels and stations/on train information screens with any cancellations, delays, or changes to the stations the train will call at
- give you a reason for the alteration if the train is delayed by over ten minutes, if the train is cancelled or if we change the stations the train will be calling at
- give our best estimate for how long the disruption will last
- enable our team at our staffed stations to provide further announcements where more relevant local information is available
- keep you up to date with information from the incident scene and our control rooms, so you know what is being done to put things right
- work with rail industry partners to make sure that messages across all channels are consistent, so you don't have conflicting information
- encourage you to re-plan your journey using our journey planners, by viewing the Live Departure Boards or by speaking to our team, so you can understand how the disruption will affect your journey
- make sure that if we know a train is cancelled, it won't be possible to buy a ticket for that journey on our website or a ticket-buying app. Our team members will make sure you know there are problems before they sell you a ticket
- make sure you're reminded of your right to claim compensation if your journey is disrupted

We'll clearly explain things to you, by:

- posting a message on our homepage and app, as well as the [nationalrail.co.uk](https://www.nationalrail.co.uk) website if the change to your journey is part of a larger incident affecting the network, to let you know:
 - what the **problem** is
 - how it might **impact** your journey
 - our **advice** and options for you to consider
- telling you how the incident is progressing:
 - whether we are **investigating** the problem
 - if work is **ongoing** to fix the problem
 - whether the problem is **resolved**
 - if the incident has been **cleared** with the train service back to normal
- making sure our information is:
 - **clear**: easy to understand and jargon free
 - **consistent**: you'll get the same information whatever channel you use
 - **correct**: we'll give you factual information. If we don't know something, we'll tell you that we don't know it
 - **concise**: we'll keep things simple
- sharing relevant travel options that help you make decisions about your journey. These may include:
 - checking if your **journey by train** is currently possible
 - travelling on **another route** (which might include local public transport)
 - using **Emergency Replacement Transport**
 - travelling at a **later time** or on another day



Image: Rail passenger with a bicycle at a train station

We'll give you a helping hand by:

- taking care of you - if the last train of the day is cancelled, we won't leave you stranded
- helping you with directions if we suggest an alternative route and you're not familiar with it
- making it clear that if we tell you to travel on a different train, route or operator, there will be no extra charge and you don't have to change your ticket even if it is for a specific train or operator
- ensuring that if you had to travel from another station on your outward journey because your planned journey was disrupted and your ticket was being accepted on that route, you will be able to travel back to that station without paying an extra fare using your original ticket - even if there is no longer any disruption
- making it clear how you can get in touch with us if you want to let us know how we are doing. We will listen to your feedback and use this to help improve in the future



Sharing our tips...

We think it's important that you know what tools are available to help keep you informed.

There are some things we would encourage you to do:

- always check before you travel, to make sure that nothing has changed, through your train company's website or app, nationalrail.co.uk or the National Rail Enquiries app
- remember that "everyone's journey is different", and that using a journey planner is the best way to find the best trains to match your journey - especially if your journey is disrupted
- ask for help; we're here whether that's before you travel, on the day if you need it or after you've travelled
- sign up for our notification services, and we'll make sure to explain the benefits



Image: Trains travelling at night



Image: Liverpool Street Station

- check out the 'Ticket Availability' pages so you know when Advance tickets will go on sale
- be aware that some stations may not be accessible for everyone - plan ahead to make your journey as smooth as possible
- know where to go to get information about a major incident on our website or app
- remember it can take us time to get alternatives arranged during disruption - please be patient and kind to our team whilst we work hard to put things in place
- be aware that you might be able to claim compensation if you are delayed



Always improving...

We're always looking to do things better - and we want to keep improving your experience.

Below are our aspirations for the future - some train companies may already deliver some of these, others may not be able to just yet. On certain parts of the rail network, some may not be appropriate - for example, not all train companies offer Advance tickets and therefore there is no benefit in providing a ticket availability alert service.

We hope that many of these, over time, will become part of our customer information pledges.

In the future, we hope to:

- enable you to register for ticket availability alerts, so you know when tickets are available to book for your chosen travel date
- give you the ability to create travel alerts that will notify you before you travel if there are any changes to your journey
- offer you the option to be notified if your train times have changed after you bought your ticket
- let you know the departure point of any replacement bus when you're planning the journey, so you know where to go
- keep our teams up to date with reliable technology
- provide coaching to our teams, so they know how to effectively share information with you and use technology more confidently
- give you advance notice if other modes of transport are disrupted, so you can plan
- in our journey planner and Live Departure Boards, identify trains that may potentially be affected by disruption - especially when we don't know exactly what the impact will be, so you can check back later or find an alternative train
- publish a plan, so that you know what to expect when things go wrong. This will mean we deliver a consistent approach to getting you moving again if things go wrong
- use our onboard information systems to let you know about a change to the service as soon as possible
- let you know about problems before you buy your ticket from our ticket machines
- let you know how many carriages your train will have, how busy your train is expected to be and if we expect trains or stations to be busier than normal
- use technology so that we can offer advice that is personal to you and the time you're travelling
- make improvements to ensure information is accessible and inclusive to everyone, including alternative languages and formats
- improve the information we share about the layout of your train, so you know what facilities are available onboard



Image: Train travelling over a viaduct



This document has been produced through collaboration between train operators, Network Rail and Rail Delivery Group as part of the "Smarter Information, Smarter Journeys" programme.

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Rail Delivery Group



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