

Chilternrailways

Continuous Improvements Report 2025-26 Complaints Handling

April 2026

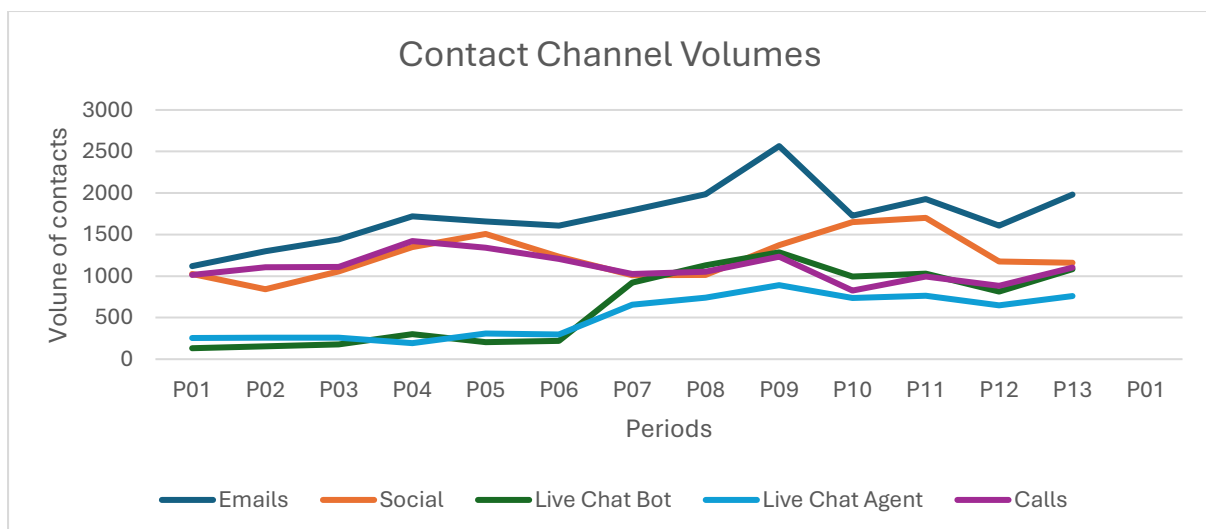
In April 2026, we employed a new Customer Relations Specialist role. This role covers various tasks within our Contact Centre but one area they focus on is handling all Accessibility complaints, ensuring dedicated resource to this area.

In addition to this, they monitor all booked passenger assists, ensuring that any potential problems are picked up early with alternative transport arranged / providing additional travel advice for customers. As a result of this, we have seen complaints for 'Booked Assist Not Provided' drop from 42 complaints in the year 2024-25 to a reduced number of 20 complaints in the year 2025-26.

Looking ahead, they will also begin contacting customers where the Passenger Assist app shows an incomplete journey in order to discuss any concerns with them / put things right with the customer.

In addition to this new role, we have discussed our complaints handling with our Accessibility Panel in order to gather feedback on the process. All members were aware of the process and how they could contact us, some of which had also used this process. They were satisfied with the range of contact methods we had and those who had used the process were satisfied with the outcome. We will continue to discuss specific complaints and the process with them on an ongoing basis to learn and improve.

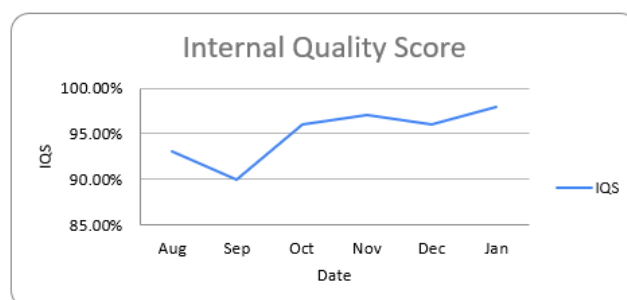
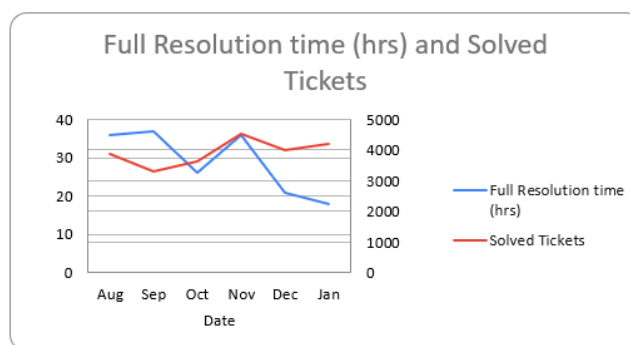
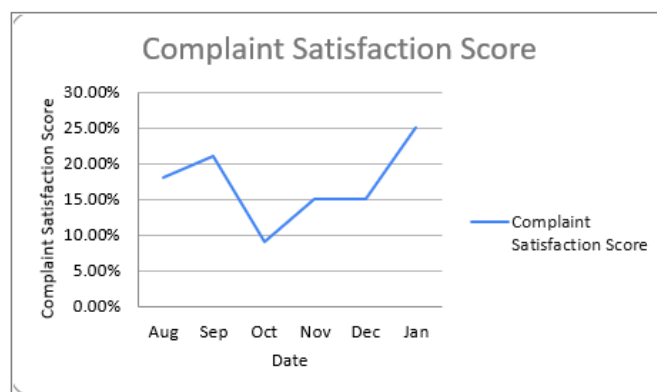
After introducing a triage Chat Bot within our Live Chat function last year, during Period 7 of this year, we expanded the availability of this service by launching the service on all none sales channels across our website. Prior to this change, this was only available on our Contact Us pages. As shown in the following graph, we immediately saw the use of the live chat increase from an average of 460 contacts across the Bot and Agents to 1800 contacts, ensuring we were able to help more customers quickly. Having The Bot triage in place is also ensuring that the Bot resolves on average, 60% of all Live Chat contacts, ensuring a quick resolution for customers and allowing our Agents to stay readily available to handle the more complex queries and complaints. Other contact channels have not dropped, highlighting that we are helping more customers, rather than seeing a shift of customers using a different channel.



During Period 7, we introduced 2 new features to our Case Management system – Co-Pilot and automated Quality Assurance. Quality Assurance has allowed us to monitor tone, readability, grammar/spelling, greetings and more on 100% of all cases to improve the level of service we offer, whereas previously we were only able to manually review a small sample size of correspondence.

The Co-Pilot tool provides the agents with suggested responses, using our customer facing FAQs and also allows the team to use key words to search our internal database to quickly furnish the team with information to help support customers. Other key features include a tool to rewrite our responses in a different tone such as making the message friendlier and a function to see previous responses to other similar complaints/enquiries, again, providing information to the team to allow them to gather information and respond to customers more efficiently.

These tools have provided an increase in customer satisfaction scores, an improvement to average resolution times (despite increased contacts received) and a continued increase to Quality Assurance scores to name some improvements, as shown in the following graphs. All of which ensure an improved service for our customers in terms of speedy resolution, knowledgeable responses and customer focused tone/wording.



Top Complaints and Learnings

Type of Complaint	Feedback
Sufficient room for all passengers to sit/stand	We have started to introduce our new Mark5A trains, providing more capacity across our route. In line with this, we are developing our December 2026 timetable, which is expected to provide over 10,000 additional seats each weekday.
The attitudes and helpfulness of the staff at station	<p>Between now and August 2026 we will start rolling out various in person and online training courses to our front line staff including Suicide Prevention, Unwanted Sexual Behaviour, Zero Tolerance, Disability Awareness, Empathy Lab and culture and values.</p> <p>These will involve putting learning in to practice with an 'inform, educate and imbed' approach. This will then continue throughout the year and beyond.</p> <p>In addition to equipping our front line teams with the right knowledge and skills to provide the best possible level of customer service, Management will also undertake training to ensure they can fully support their staff in living our core values and behaviours.</p> <p>Where staff members have already completed the training or refresher training, we will continuously review staff performance and further induct staff to any training where we feel this may be required.</p>
Upkeep and repair of the train	<p>A high-level access shed is being completed at Banbury depot, this will allow work to roof based systems such as air condition modules to take place at Banbury. Remote condition monitoring will be fitted to the Class 165 and 168 trains, and new air conditioning modules and higher performance radiators are being purchased for Class 168s.</p> <p>We have also recently introduced new MK5 train sets to replace the older Mk3 (Silver) fleet, providing a newer and better on board experience and work continues to refurbish our Class 168 fleet.</p>
Punctuality/reliability (i.e. the train arriving/departing on time)	Investment to improve performance is being made. The Mk5 train sets which are now in service replacing the Mk3 (silver) fleet, Class 168 refurbishment continues and modification to the Class 165 coolant system has been completed. A high-level access shed is being completed at Banbury depot, this will allow work to roof based systems such as air condition

	<p>modules to take place at Banbury. Remote condition monitoring will be fitted to the Class 165 and 168 trains, and new air conditioning modules and higher performance radiators are being purchased for Class 168s. Network Rail are undertaking a Marylebone area reliability improvement plan with work recently taking place to improve track drainage, refurbish point work, and reballast track work. Strengthening of embankments between Bicester North and Haddenham is underway to remove speed restrictions and provide resilience. Signalling system power supplies are being refurbished, with reliability work also on track circuits and axle counters. On the Metropolitan Line, the signalling system continues to age but will be replaced in the forthcoming 4 Lines Modernisation Project, which will benefit our services on the London Marylebone to Aylesbury (via Amersham) route. We are continuing to recruit train drivers and train managers to maintain our staffing levels. All of this is expected to provide better reliability of our services in terms of both delays and cancellations.</p>
<p>The helpfulness and attitude of staff on train</p>	<p>Between now and August 2026 we will start rolling out various in person and online training courses to our front line staff including Suicide Prevention, Unwanted Sexual Behaviour, Zero Tolerance, Disability Awareness, Empathy Lab and culture and values. These will involve putting learning in to practice with an 'inform, educate and imbed' approach. This will then continue throughout the year and beyond. In addition to equipping our front line teams with the right knowledge and skills to provide the best possible level of customer service, Management will also undertake training to ensure they can fully support their staff in living our core values and behaviours. Where staff members have already completed the training or refresher training, we will continuously review staff performance and further induct staff to any training where we feel this may be required.</p>