

In-touch

Modernising our station experience

Thameslink prepares to take the railway digital

Govia Thameslink Railway

Stakeholder Newsletter

Period 7 2016-2017

Our stakeholder newsletter features business updates, news from our local communities and performance analysis.

Class 700 arrives on Wimbledon and Sutton loop

Thameslink's new generation of train is now running on the Wimbledon and Sutton 'loop' and on stopping services to and from St Albans and Luton, via stations such as Radlett and Elstree & Borehamwood, offering passengers greater space and a modern travelling environment.

The new Thameslink Class 700 has replaced Class 319 trains and began operating 11 services a day on the Wimbledon and Sutton 'loop' on 31 October; one of these is in the morning peak but more will follow. The Class 700 has been operating on the longer-distance Bedford-Brighton service since June.



First 8-car Class 700 at London Blackfriars

2018 timetable update

Our 2018 timetable consultation has been live for approximately nine weeks and we have had lots of feedback in from passengers and stakeholders alike. Phil Hutchinson – head of strategic planning and his team have been out and about at major stations carrying out meet the manager style sessions with passengers, answering questions about the consultation and raising awareness.

Additionally they have been attending meetings with rail user groups, local authorities and drop in sessions at Westminster and the London Assembly. The team presented at the Southern and Gatwick Express stakeholder forum in October and the Thameslink and Great Northern forum on 15 November.

There is still plenty of time to review the proposals and participate as the consultation is open until 17:00 Thursday 8 December. For further information please use the below links:

<http://www.thameslinkrailway.com/your-journey/timetable-consultation> or

<http://www.southernrailway.com/your-journey/timetable-consultation>.

GTR sustainability report 2016

This year's edition of the company's sustainability report is now available and can be viewed using the below links:

<http://www.southernrailway.com/southern/corporate-responsibility/reports/> &
<http://www.thameslinkrailway.com/about-us/news/govia-thameslink-railway-publishes-2015->

Public Performance Measure (PPM)

The full performance report is included at the back of the newsletter. This includes commentary on the joint GTR and Network Rail improvement plan.

Period 7: 18 September - 14 October 2016

Gatwick Express

P7: 74.83% PPM

Great Northern

P7: 75.63% PPM

Southern

P7: 74.03% PPM

Thameslink

P7: 78.83% PPM

Industrial relations update

The RMT has announced further strike action in December over the Christmas and New Year period; in addition to the 17 days of strike action taken to date with 11 more to go this year.

22nd – 23rd November, 6th – 8th December, 22nd-24th December and 31st December – 2nd January

We can confirm that 220 conductors – 99 per cent – have signed up to the new On-Board Supervisor (OBS) role and will now take up the new role in January, which focuses exclusively on customer service and moves the operation of closing doors to the driver. A further 222 people will remain in their existing roles as conductors on certain Southern services.

We will be also recruiting a further 100 people to work OBS roles across Southern and Gatwick Express services and an advertising campaign has been launched.

The impact of future RMT strikes will reduce as we complete the process of giving drivers full operational control of trains. OBSs can work more flexibly, we are now recruiting more of them and if one is not available at short notice, we can run a train without one being available.

Modernising our station experience

On 14 November we began to test the station host concept. The first three stations are: Chichester, Enfield Chase and Sandy, as agreed with union representatives and passenger bodies.

These trials will give us the opportunity to thoroughly test all aspects of our proposals, including ticket office layout, technology supporting the change and what training our station colleagues need. The remaining stations (Battersea Park, Balham, City Thameslink, Cricklewood, Queens Road Peckham) will be live by the start of December and will be trialled for six months. Initial feedback on the training from colleagues who have volunteered for the trial has been very positive. A union representative has also agreed to take part in the secondment as well, this provide a useful insight into the role.

Passengers using these stations will see our seconded station hosts on the concourse area, they will be able to assist passengers using the ticket machines, journey advise and sell tickets from a handheld device. There have been no reductions in staffing levels at stations trialling the concepts and station users will be kept informed of updates via local communications, including station posters.

We have a number of measurement methods in place, not only to see if the trial has been a success, but to monitor and make improvements for the duration of the trial. We will be working with Transport Focus, monitoring the National Rail Passenger Survey data as well as gathering our own data through an independent researcher. We will also be gathering detailed feedback from our Station Hosts both through the unions and our own managers, and will be asking our customer cabinet and access advisory panel to monitor the trials.

Please find attached an organisation chart of the new top line operations structure.

Southern restores more services to timetable

From 24 October we restored our full timetable across the Southern network, with the exception of the 33 off-peak Gatwick Express extension services that will be restored in December.

We are taking steps to better manage the impact of leaf-fall seasonal conditions on passenger services and is leaving these services out until the end of autumn which will help reduce congestion and reactionary delays on the busy Brighton mainline route.

During the leaf-fall period, with challenging slippery rail conditions, trains take longer to reach their destinations, leading to congestion, cancellations and delays. In recognition of this from 24th October until 9th December,

weekday Southern and Gatwick Express trains arriving or departing from London Victoria or London Bridge may have their journey times extended by between one and three minutes. Weekday Thameslink trains on the busy Brighton mainline from Three Bridges to Brighton and from Brighton to London Bridge will also have their journey times extended up to three minutes. This practise is standard in the rail industry in the leaf fall timetable and results in more reliable journey times, giving greater certainty for passengers.

New Chief Operating Officer starts

In October we announced that Nick Brown will be taking over from Dyan Crowther as chief operating office, Nick has joined the business and will formally take up the role on 21 November.

Thameslink prepares to take the railway digital with Traffic Management system

Jointly, we currently run the busiest railway in the country with Network Rail and we're about to get busier.

When Thameslink ramps up its service to 24-trains per hour through the "core" from Blackfriars to St Pancras, our staff are going to need help to make sure the right trains turn up in the right place at the right time.

Traffic Management is the answer. Traffic Management is a decision-supporting tool that will help us by predicting and managing conflicts proactively, maximising capacity and minimising the time that one train has to wait for another .

Our Traffic Management for Thameslink team is focusing on how the system will work on the route when it goes live in 2018. They are working with the Thameslink Programme and suppliers Hitachi, preparing for their system to be tested from mid-2017.

The system will help our people by automatically setting the train routes in the core Thameslink area, and make sure trains are in the right order at the right time as they enter the area. It will also identify and recommend changes to the timetable to prevent potential conflicts across the Thameslink area.

This area covers an approximate 20-minute radius of key operational locations from the core, as well as the Brighton Main Line.

The Traffic Management System will also connect to other technology, including Automatic Train Operation (ATO), European Train Control System (ETCS) and the Connected Driver's Advisory System (C-DAS), to track trains on the network and enable our drivers to run at optimum safe speed. This is the first deployment in the world that combines these technologies on a busy mainline railway.

This will improve our train performance by helping us to recover from disruption, reduce delays and minimise congestion.



Control team at Three Bridges control centre

No trains between London Victoria and Clapham Junction on Sunday 20 November

Engineering work is taking place between London Victoria and Clapham Junction closing most lines.

As a result of this engineering work there will be no Gatwick Express or Southern trains between London Victoria and Clapham Junction.

Southeastern trains are not affected by this engineering work.

The Gatwick Express service will not run. Customers should use trains Southern trains between London Bridge and Gatwick Airport.

Southern trains are replaced by buses between London Victoria and Clapham Junction.

The following alterations to trains to / from London Bridge will apply:

Brighton - trains will run half hourly

Ore - trains will run hourly

Portsmouth Harbour / Littlehampton - trains will run hourly

Tonbridge - trains will run between Redhill and Tonbridge. Customers should use alternative trains between London Bridge and Redhill.

Caterham - trains will run between Balham and Caterham. Additional trains will run to / from Clapham Junction

Sutton - trains will run between Selhurst and Sutton and also between Balham and Sutton via Crystal Palace

Dorking - trains will run half hourly between Clapham Junction and Dorking via Selhurst.

Bognor Regis / East Grinstead - trains are diverted to start / terminate at London Bridge.

Tickets will be valid on any replacement bus.

Full details of these changes and the impact on your journey, please use the National Rail Enquiries Journey Planner

News from our communities

New chapter for Cricklewood

Cricklewood Town Team and the local library have helped Thameslink open a pop-up community library at its railway station.

Cricklewood station was adopted by the Town Team earlier this year and the group have already worked with Thameslink and others to revamp the entrance. Long gone is the dingy wall, which attracted litter, and in its place sits a beautiful flower bed, striking station sign and local photo collages. The group's work won a silver medal in the "It's Your Station" category of the Association of Community Rail Partnership awards.

Now, in partnership with the Friends of Cricklewood library, passengers can drop off, borrow or exchange a book with fellow travellers. The project got the go-ahead after it was successfully trialled at Willesden Green Underground station. The bookcase was funded by NorthWestTWO Residents' Association and bought from the local British Heart Foundation charity shop, while The Friends of Cricklewood Library supplied a set of books to get started.

James Gillett, Cricklewood Station Manager, said "I think our customers will love the idea of a pop-up library and it's

another great way to integrate the station further into the local community. The library will continue to support the station with as many books as we need."

Marie Hancock, from the Town Team, added: "Our thanks to Mick, Diana and James from Thameslink for all their help setting up this excellent new addition to the station we all love. People will also notice the burgeoning flowerbed with plants donated by residents and the new logs to attract bees. Cricklewood is now looking blooming marvellous."

Pictured, left to right, are: Michelle Ferguson, Diana Daniel, Mick Richards and Caty Delmont. Michelle and Caty are local residents working with the Town Team and were involved with the project from the beginning. Diana is the station's sales assistant and Mick is one of Thameslink's distribution team drivers.



Cricklewood station's pop-up library

National Transport Awards success

Congratulations to Mike Tyler and the Hatfield station team for their recognition at the National Transport Awards last Thursday. Mike Tyler, RCO at St Albans, was highly commended in the Frontline Employee of the Year category in recognition of his progress and commitment since completing one of our Get Into Railway programmes. He is an Ambassador for the Prince's Trust and has been trained as a mentor to young people who are now completing other programmes. Hatfield station was shortlisted in the Station of the Year category. As a result of partnership working, visitors now have a modern station with almost 400 car parking spaces, five times more bike racks and a modern bus interchange.

GTR was also recently shortlisted for two categories at the Cycle Rail awards.

Hatfield station has seen a 516% increase in cycle spaces as part of the rebuilding of the location last year. The new cycle spaces replace the old racks which were exposed to the elements, not covered by CCTV and heavily oversubscribed.

Meanwhile, the joint efforts of the Rail Neighbourhood

Officers (RNOs) and British Transport Police has seen over 60 cycle surgeries held at stations across the network, with a total of 1,332 bikes security marked and 397 free high security bike locks given away to passengers. The impact of these surgeries saw a 19% reduction in cycle crime network-wide.

Although we didn't win any of the awards, it was nice to see work across GTR being recognised and is a testament to the efforts of teams across the company.

Station partnerships take root

Our station partnerships continue to grow, with volunteers helping us tailor their station to the area it serves.

Enfield Chase's station partner has recently been awarded a certificate of merit by Enfield in Bloom, for the best public building category. The judges were particularly impressed with the container planting at the station. Meanwhile, Spa Valley railway, station partner at Eridge, won a silver gilt certificate in the Royal Tunbridge Wells in Bloom competition. This recognised the planters the group have along the railway line they operate from Eridge to Tunbridge.

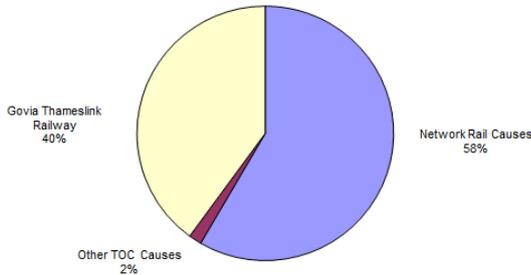


Eridge station partnership add new planters

These graphs present the split of delay responsibility for the year to date. Underneath is a high level overview of biggest impacting incidents in the last period.

Gatwick Express

Govia Thameslink Railway - Gatwick Express Route Delay Responsibility (13 Periods)

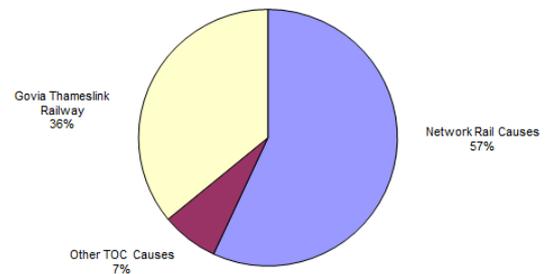


Major incidents that affected performance in P7:

- 26 September 2016: Cab safety systems alert at Selhurst
- 1 October 2016: Power supply problems at Streatham Common
- 2 October 2016: External transport connection issues
- 11 October 2016: Engineering works overrun in Balcombe area

Great Northern

Govia Thameslink Railway - Great Northern Route Delay Responsibility (13 Periods)

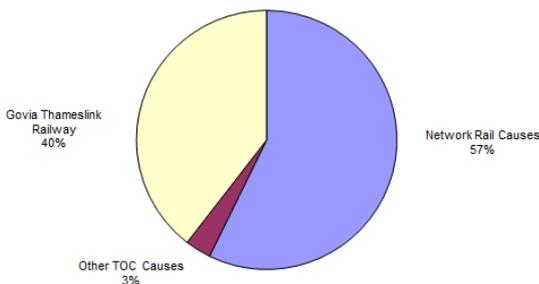


Major incidents that affected performance in P7:

- 19 September 2016: Derailment in the Welwyn Garden City area
- 21 September 2016: Trespasser at Alexandra Palace
- 30 September 2016: Overhead wire problem in Cambridge area
- 11 October 2016: Trespass incident in Hatfield area

Southern

Govia Thameslink Railway - Southern Route Delay Responsibility (13 Periods)

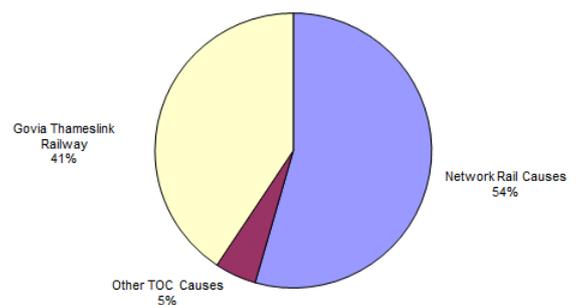


Major incidents that affected performance in P7:

- 26 September 2016: Signalling problems in Balham area
- 28 September 2016: Broken down freight train at Lewes
- 1 October 2016: Power supply problems at Streatham Common
- 4 October 2016: Fire affecting the power supply in Streatham area

Thameslink

Govia Thameslink Railway - Thameslink Route Delay Responsibility (13 Periods)



Major incidents that affected performance in P7:

- 30 September 2016: Broken down train at West Hampstead
- 5 October 2016: Fire affecting the power supply in Streatham
- 11 October 2016: Possession overrun in Balcombe area
- 12 October 2016: Signalling problems at Streatham

Joint Performance Improvement Update

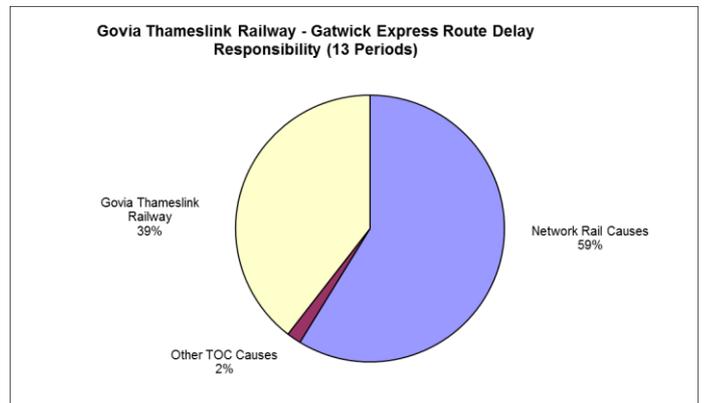
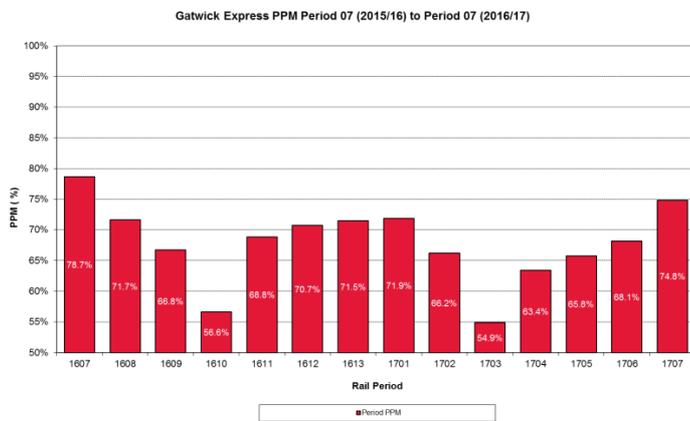
Issued 14 November 2016



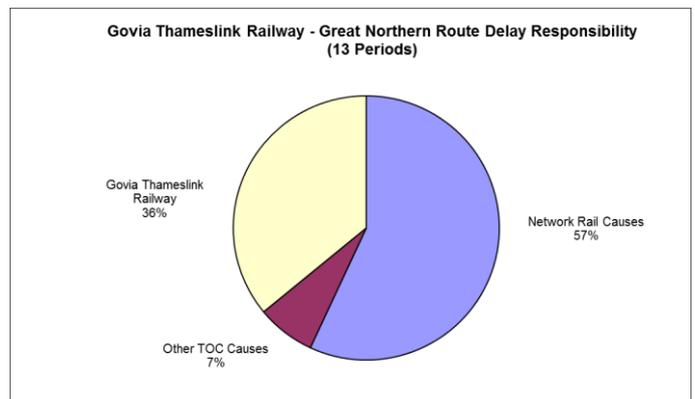
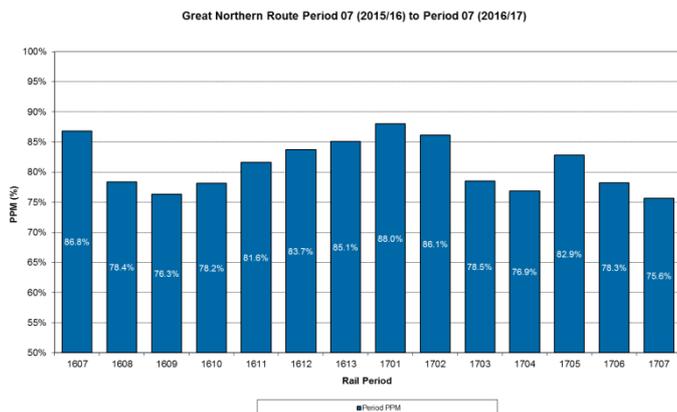
This report gives progress on the joint improvement plan for Govia Thameslink Railway (GTR) and Network Rail with punctuality data by route, as well as the main operational issues this period (there are 13, 4-week reporting periods per year) and planned customer improvements.

PPM* statistics and delay responsibility by route – Period 7 (to 15 October 2016)

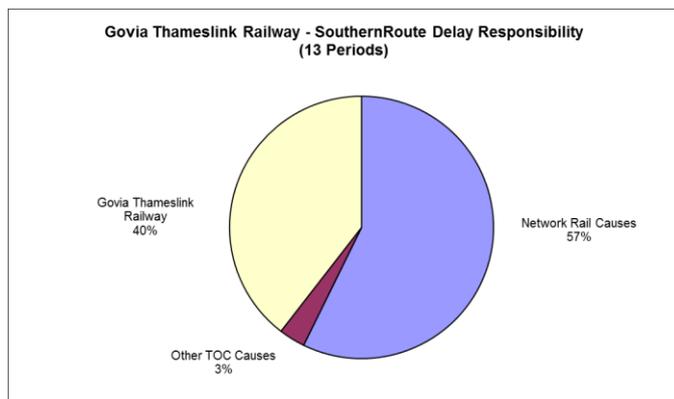
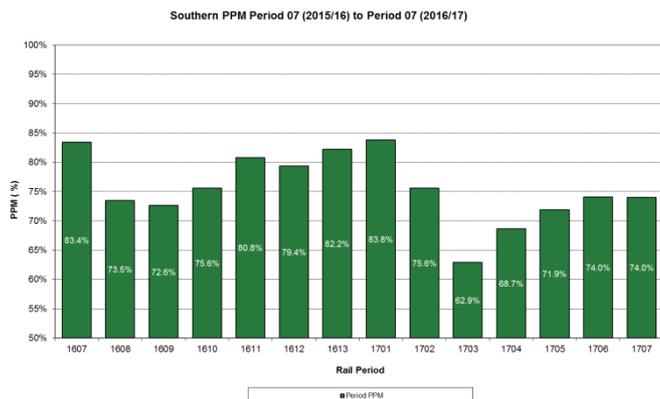
Gatwick Express



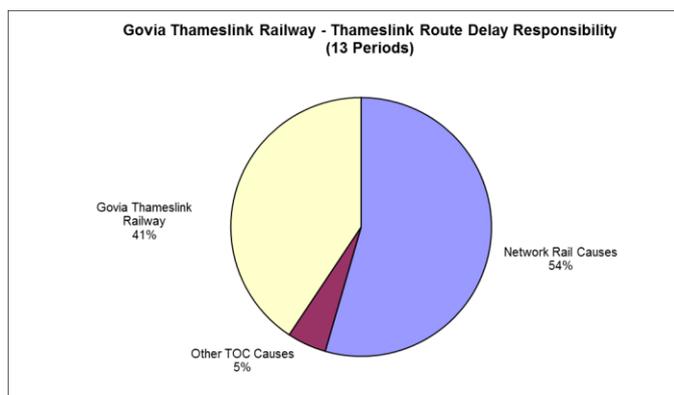
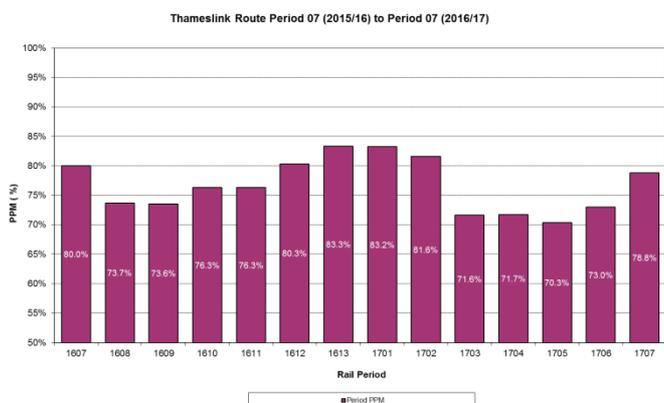
Great Northern



Southern



Thameslink



*The public performance measure (PPM) data above shows the percentage of trains which arrive at their terminating station within five minutes of the planned arrival time. It combines figures for punctuality and reliability into a single performance measure. The PPM figures for the four-week period ending on 15 October on each route are: Gatwick Express 74.8%, Great Northern 75.6%, Southern 74% and Thameslink 78.8%.

A summary of key issues affecting performance in this period (the four weeks up to 15 October)

There was a slight increase in the percentage of trains on time this period with the PPM rising to 75.4% for GTR overall. In addition to the continued industrial action by the RMT, the biggest incidents during the period were a fire under a conductor rail near Streatham on 4 October, a person on the track near Alexandra Palace on 21 September, a power supply failure at Streatham Common on 1 October and a freight train failure at Kensington on 28 September.

Delivering improvements for passengers

Thameslink Class 700s

We now have nine, 12 coach trains and three, 8 coach trains in regular service between Brighton and London Bridge or Bedford and, since 31 October, they are now operating on the suburban route between Wimbledon, Sutton and St Albans and Luton. Ultimately there will be 115 of these new trains running on an expanded Thameslink network.



As new class 700 Thameslink trains come into service, 29 class 387/1 trains are being moved from Thameslink to Great Northern, providing the most modern trains on this route. These class 387s started on the route in October and are around two years old, having been in service on Bedford – Brighton Thameslink services.

Driver training programme

We are continuing with the UK's biggest driver recruitment project so that we can cover today's service, support driver conversion training on all the new trains we are bringing in, and be ready for the additional services that we will run in future. Currently we rely to a degree on our drivers working on their rest days, a long established and common practice in the industry, but increasingly this can't cover all the shifts required.

By 15 October 2016 on Thameslink, two additional trainees passed their training bringing the total since January 2015 to 70, and there were 106 trainees in progress. On Great Northern, five trainee drivers passed making a total of 86, with 81 further trainees. On Southern, five drivers passed their training making 126 in total since January 2015. There are 87 Southern drivers in training.

Performance Strategy

Huge investment is being put into the railway which will ultimately deliver more capacity through new and longer trains at the end of the Thameslink programme in 2018, as well as a transformed station at London Bridge. However, this major construction work is a significant contributor to the deterioration in punctuality across services, more so than anyone anticipated. At the end of 2015, an independent study was undertaken to better understand the impact of the work at London Bridge on the train service. The study revealed that since the work started in 2014 the network has fundamentally changed with a reduction in platforms and approach tracks at London Bridge, with more services diverted into London Victoria or via Herne Hill, leading to knock on delays being longer and being felt over a wider area than ever before.

The Thameslink programme works are at their most difficult phase with the infrastructure at its maximum level of restriction. To mitigate this challenge we have established an Alliance with Network Rail which focuses on improving service reliability and performance. The analysis provided by this study has given the GTR and Network Rail teams a fresh perspective on how to address some of the issues affecting train punctuality. As a result, GTR and Network Rail have defined joint work-streams as part of the Performance Strategy. These have been developed and teams across both businesses are working tirelessly to change performance now and in the longer term.

We continue to make progress on this and highlights of the activities this period include:

The right train specification between now and 2018

The public consultation for the new timetable for 2018 is now well underway with five weeks left to submit responses. In 2018, services across the Thameslink, Great Northern, Southern and Gatwick Express routes will be completely recast with many new connections between communities in the south of England to stations in the heart of London and beyond, to Bedford, Peterborough and Cambridge. Full details are available from the home page of our websites. The consultation closes at 5pm on 8 December 2016.

Autumn/Winter preparation

Network Rail's preparation for autumn/winter continues with the clearance of more than 130 miles of trees and vegetation from key areas of the South East's railway. We have 10 rail head treatment trains and multi-purpose vehicles working 24 hours a day to blast leaf debris from the tracks as the late autumn sees large amounts of leaves falling. These leaves get compressed by passing trains, creating a thin, black 'Teflon'-like layer on the rail which – much like black ice on the roads – can affect train braking and acceleration as a result of reduced friction between train wheels and rails. This means train drivers have to slow down earlier for stations and signals to avoid overshooting them and then move off again more slowly to avoid wheel spin.

Track reliability

We are well underway with relaying track and ballast through Balcombe Tunnel on the Brighton Main Line to improve quality and the comfort of passenger journeys.

In the last few weeks, we have also re-laid track and ballast through platforms at Purley station to reduce the risk of temporary speed restrictions.



Across the network, Network Rail continues to work hard to improve infrastructure reliability, focusing on infrastructure that has the highest risk of failure and the most impact on passengers.

We have dedicated response teams at these critical locations and will be increasing the size of these teams. We are working to improve the time it takes to fix faults and recover the service and continue to work side-by-side with GTR to improve day-to-day performance.

Chris Gibb and the joint improvement board

On 1 September the DfT announced a £20m fund and a new review board to work with GTR, the DfT and Network Rail to explore how to achieve a rapid improvement in services for passengers on the Southern network.

The board is led by one of Britain's most senior industry figures - Chris Gibb - with 35 years' rail experience including as the former chief operating officer of Virgin Rail and currently a non-executive director at Network Rail. Two passenger representatives also sit on the board to ensure passengers' views are heard. This announcement followed months of disruption to Southern services linked with strike issues and recurring infrastructure problems at key locations on the network.

Since the appointment, Chris has been working very closely with GTR and Network Rail to identify actions required which will improve performance on the network. It is basing its work around three themes - Control, Stations and Planning.

More broadly, opportunities identified within the £20m fund include: £2m to be spent on more rapid response teams to fix faults more quickly, located close to known hotspots; £2.5m on accelerated track maintenance; £800,000 investment in extra signal supervisors; and £900,000 in a series of measures to minimise the impact of bridge strikes.

The latest meeting of the board in October covered an update on recent performance on the line. From the passenger perspective, problems such as broken down trains and signalling issues were raised (over and above strike disruption); overcrowding caused by trains running with fewer carriages on strike days; and the Delay Repay system featured.

The Gibb review is to be produced by the end of the year.

