# Rail user feedback on timetabling issues

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| **Your organisation: Railfuture –** <br> **London & South East and East Anglia regional branches** |
| **Train company** (delete where not applicable)**:** |
| • **Thameslink** |
| • **Great Northern** |
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**When answering each of the following questions please be as specific as you can and where possible provide examples.**

As regional branches covering a large geographical network, and with a substantial number of groups and individuals contributing their own specific local experiences, we here confine ourselves to the broader picture. Nationally, Railfuture has contributed this to the House of Commons Transport Committee https://www.railfuture.org.uk/display1795 and published this article https://www.railfuture.org.uk/article1797-Murder-on-the-Thameslink-Northern-Express

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| **1. What was the quality of the information provided by the train company (on the train, platform, etc before and during the disruption)?** <br><br> The overall impression was that 'information' was generally untrustworthy; the evidence of one's own eyes on the platform as trains either stopped, or passed through, became the only definitive source! There were too many disparities between different sources, whether platform CIS, station announcements, websites, apps, and the long-suffering front-line staff who unfairly bore the brunt of passengers' understandable frustrations. |
| **1a. How was this information communicated, and was it timely?** <br><br> However information was disseminated, it might have been timely at first but too often was then changed at short notice. |
| **1b. Do you have any views on how the information might be improved?** <br><br> It might be said that if muck is what comes out then that's simply because it was already muck when it went in! Ultimately the information can only ever be as good, or as bad, as the raw material it's based on. Unsurprisingly the information improved as the stability and predictability of the service improved. One can't envy the operational controllers who, as it was experienced out on the network, gave users a very good if unintended impression that they were having to make it up as they went along! |

**2. What was the impact of the disruption on passengers?**

So many people's life-styles have been turned upside down and inside out, tossed from pillar to post on a daily basis. In London in particular passengers have increasingly become used to '*transport you can depend on*' when it comes to the generality of their daily experiences of London Underground and London Overground, and London Trams and the DLR. To then be confronted with the vagaries of mainline operators seemingly in a state of nervous breakdown has been an assault on passengers' legitimate expectations that they can build their lives around a consistently reliable public service.

**2a. Did this vary by passenger type?**

Those worst affected were regular daily commuters with fixed and tight schedules in relation to other family members. Business travellers also had their schedules badly disrupted. Although leisure travellers might have been expected to be only inconvenienced rather than disrupted, that was not true of passengers travelling on personal time-critical journeys for example to airports, to St. Pancras International, for personal events such as funerals, etc.

**3. Did the train company take any action to mitigate the effects of the disruption?**

In some cases rail replacement bus services were put on, and additional unscheduled stops inserted into those services which were running.

**3a. Were the mitigating actions successful?**

They may have been successful in themselves but it's very difficult to think of what could make up for the scale of the disruption which was experienced.