Thank you for getting in touch about your recent experience travelling with us to and from Preston Park, please accept our apologies for the disruption you have faced.

We appreciate that the situation has two sides, the planned new timetable, which was introduced from the 20th May, and the subsequent problems with its implementation, which have created a number of concerns.

The new timetable is part of a complete review of the service we operate under the ‘RailPlan 20/20’ programme. You can read more about it on our dedicated website [www.railplan2020.com](http://www.railplan2020.com) but the basic principles were to be a phased introduction of this major timetable revision which would mean changes to journeys for many customers. The new expanded Thameslink network will include consistent all-day direct train services to Cambridge all formed of 12 coaches offering increased capacity. The improved frequency of direct trains via London Bridge including faster peak services to London Blackfriars, City Thameslink, Farringdon and London St Pancras International.

·         5 trains to Victoria in the morning peak and 6 trains from Victoria in the evening peak.

·         Off peak 1 direct train per hour to Victoria.

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Following the announcement in late 2017 that the Thameslink programme will be phased in there will only be 1 peak Thameslink service Littlehampton to Bedford until Dec 2018 when there will be 2.

We know that many customers from Preston Park were already anticipating that the new timetable would not suit their needs or expectations and that the proposals would worsen their normal travel plans and we apologise for this. I do urge you to continue to share information about the effect of the new timetable with us and with the Department for Transport as we do need to have feedback about what changes are working and where there are major problems that need to be addressed.

The launch of the timetable itself has been difficult primarily because we received delayed approval from Network Rail, who manage the railway infrastructure, for the operation of the timetable. This meant that the work needed to support the timetable which includes driver training, rostering and the location of trains was not fully completed. This has caused considerable disruption and to deliver some service reliability we have had to make changes to the trains that we run. It is also the case that the disruption means some trains are shorter than they should be as the drivers needed to move the trains around to form the trains are being used elsewhere. You can read more about the background on our website at [www.railplan2020.com](http://www.railplan2020.com).

The proposed timetable also meant that some of your usual ‘Southern’ trains were replaced by Thameslink trains. As the Thameslink part of the route has been more affected by the implementation issues mentioned earlier the result has been that your train service has been even more impacted than it might have been.

We appreciate that a combination of the timetable changes as part of RP2020 and now the impact of the running of Thameslink trains has meant your service has been particularly badly affected. We know that you have experienced the removal of some trains from the timetable and also ad hoc cancellations however we are working hard to deliver some real improvements which we hope you will benefit from soon.

The current service provision consists of (mainly trains from Preston Park into London)

 2 of the morning peaks removed from the plan (see below) the below is what is planned to run (but again may have on the day cancellations)

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Time** | **From** | **To** | **Brand** | **Running now during revised TT** |
| 06:52 | PRP | LBG/STP | TL | **** |
| 07:03 | PRP | VIC | SN | **** |
| 07:11 | PRP | LBG/STP | TL | **** |
| 07:22 | PRP | LBG/STP | TL | **** |
| 07:33 | PRP | VIC | SN | **** |
| 07:38 | PRP | LBG/STP | TL | **** |
| 08:11 | PRP | LBG/STP | TL | **** |
| 08:29 | PRP | VIC | SN | **** |
| 08:32 | PRP | LBG/STP | TL | **** |
| 08:57 | PRP | VIC | SN | **** |

After the morning peak our Southern trains will be making additional stops at Preston Park although this isn’t possible for Gatwick Express trains to call additionally during peak times as these trains are already very busy. We have also stabilised the current revised timetable and by mid-July a further revision should be in operation providing more confidence in the trains we can operate.

This has been a particularly difficult time for many of our customers and coupled with the promise of an improved service been even more difficult to explain. We are absolutely committed to getting the service back on track and are focussing on the areas that matter most: train service reliability and the information you need to plan your journey. Please also ensure that you claim compensation for any delays of fifteen minutes or more using our simple web form at : [www.thameslinkrailway.com/delayrepay](http://www.thameslinkrailway.com/delayrepay) which can be claimed against the original timetable or the service operating on the day.