

MAYOR OF LONDON

LONDON ASSEMBLY

Tim Shoveller

Managing Director
South West Trains
Network Rail Alliance Director (Wessex)
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Date: 03 FEB 2015

Dear Mr Shoveller

We are writing to express our concerns about the ongoing overcrowding on commuter services into central London run by South West Trains.

Members of the London Assembly regularly receive correspondence from constituents highlighting high levels of crowding on services through south west London, particularly at Wandsworth Town, Putney, Earlsfield, Wimbledon and Clapham Junction stations. One common experience is that passengers often must wait for several full trains to go by in the morning peak before they are able to board. This elongates journey times and causes significant distress for passengers. As you know, these complaints date back several years.

This area of London was highlighted as one of the 'pinch points' on London's rail network in the 2009 Transport Committee report, *The Big Squeeze: Rail overcrowding in London*, which recommended measures to help address this issue. Unfortunately, although investment has been made in London's rail services and key improvements delivered, residents in south west London are still experiencing acute overcrowding.

We note that although some of your trains in the London area are run with 10-car trains, most services in weekday peak hours continue to be run on 8-car trains. We understand that platform lengths at Waterloo station are one of the barriers to increasing capacity on your services, and that the extension of platforms 1-4 in summer 2017 will enable this. We also understand that South West trains will be adding additional 10-car trains in mid-2018 in order to support up to 20 trains per hour along the Windsor lines and additional capacity along the Basingstoke corridor during peak hours. However, we believe South West Trains should take active steps in the next two years to address overcrowding. We would be interested to hear what measures you would take prior to 2017 in order to relieve the crowding for London commuters.

We would also like to see Stagecoach and South West Trains engaging more positively with Londoners and their representatives in your efforts to tackle this. Clear and open communication between national and local government, train operating companies, passengers and other stakeholders is essential to ensure the necessary improvements are delivered, and that passengers see progress being made. While the Wessex Route Study outlines improvements for Control Period 6 (2019-2024), Londoners also need solutions that will address the conditions on your trains in the short term.

We would appreciate if you were able to respond to this letter, setting out South West Trains' plans for reducing overcrowding on these services in the immediate future. If you have any queries please contact the London Assembly Transport Committee's Scrutiny Manager, Richard Berry, by email at Richard.Berry@london.gov.uk or on 020 7983 4199.

Yours sincerely



Boris Johnson
Mayor of London



Caroline Pidgeon MBE AM
Chair of London Assembly Transport
Committee



Valerie Shawcross CBE AM
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