

Sutton Public Transport Liaison Group

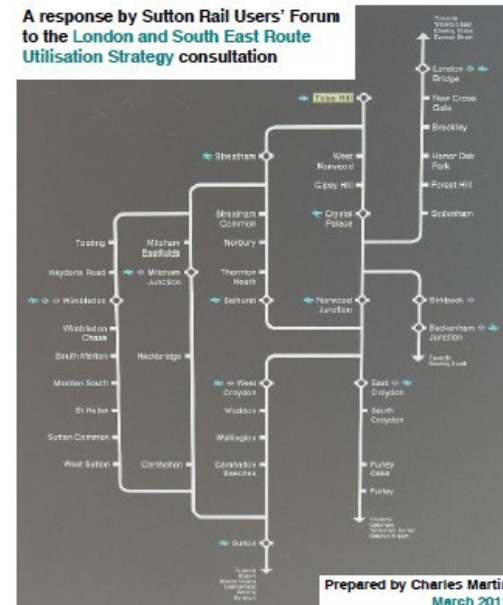
Sutton Rail Users' Forum (SRUF): Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Review of the December 2010 Southern timetable: London Victoria and Sutton



Sutton Rail Users' Forum
September 2011

A response by Sutton Rail Users' Forum to the London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy consultation



Charles Martin
18 October 2011

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

- This presentation is a distillation of the SRUF report *Review of the December 2010 Southern timetable: London Victoria and Sutton* (September 2011)
- There is a synergy between that timetable review document and the SRUF report *A response by the Sutton Rail Users' Forum to the London and South East Route Utilisation Strategy* (March 2011)
- The presentation begins by considering some background to the timetable enhancements, e.g. the 2009 South Central franchise commitment...
-then an overview of the changes - which are appreciated - is given. Most of the comment focusses more on what has not, rather than what has, been done
- Finally, some context is presented that endeavours to set the scene before suggesting options for the future

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

The December 2010 Southern timetable introduced the most significant improvement to services in south London for many years....

...although the Southern Stakeholder Brief, dated December 2010, was rather low-key:

“...there are a number of improvements to the services including more frequent evening, weekend and late evening departures on Friday and Saturday nights throughout the south London area”...

...whereas the Southern web-site was more up-beat:

“**400 more trains each week across the network**”

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Background (1): 2009 South Central franchise commitment

The Department for Transport (DfT) announced in June 2009 that Govia (Southern), was to retain the South Central franchise (first awarded in 2000).

The new franchise was to operate between 20 September 2009 and 25 July 2015, with an option to terminate a year early in July 2014 if the franchise failed to achieve its performance benchmarks. Alternatively it could be extended by up to 2 years to run until July 2017.

Key train service enhancements during the franchise were to include:

- Longer suburban services made up of ten car trains, with delivery starting in 2011 and being completed by 2013
- Four trains per hour (tph) on most routes in south London until around 23:00 Monday to Saturday and new late night services in south London on Friday and Saturday nights with most routes running trains until 00:30
- Additional services in south London on Sundays with four tph on most routes

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Background (2): May 2010 timetable

In May 2010 the southern extension of the East London line refurbishment was completed following £1bn investment programme. London Overground services began operating between New Cross/Crystal Palace/West Croydon and Dalston Junction (with a further extension to Highbury and Islington in May 2011).

Consequently, the May 2010 Southern timetable included some changes:

- Stations between West Croydon and New Cross Gate were transferred from Southern to London Overground Rail Operations Ltd. (LOROL)
- Off-peak, half-hourly, Southern services between London Bridge and Sutton via Forest Hill were diverted to operate to and from London Victoria via Crystal Palace
 - Impact of this change to people travelling between London Bridge and intermediate stations to Sutton stations was relatively low. London Bridge could be more quickly reached by changing to a faster train at Norwood Junction anyway, and although Sutton stations were no longer directly connected to intermediate stations north of Norwood Junction, the opportunity to make such a journey increased from twice an hour to four times an hour, albeit requiring a change of services at West Croydon. And West Croydon facilitates an easy, same-platform, interchange.

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

What changed in December 2010? (1) Monday to Friday

- Hackbridge line: During the evenings (from about 19:30 to 23:00) the service frequency between London Victoria and Epsom via Hackbridge was increased from two tph to four tph (with the new services having the same stopping pattern as the existing services, i.e. calling at most intermediate stations)
- Friday nights: Additional late night trains were introduced on Friday nights from London Victoria:
 - 00:20 from London Victoria to Sutton via Hackbridge (arriving Sutton at 00:51)
 - 00:34 from London Victoria to Sutton via Norbury (arriving Sutton at 01:16)
- 17:32 London Bridge to Guildford service retimed to 17:29
- 19:31 London Bridge to Dorking train scheduled to call additionally at Ashtead (20:16)

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

What changed in December 2010? (2) Saturday

- Hackbridge line: The daytime pattern and timings of services (i.e. two tph semi-fast and two tph serving most intermediate stations) was extended into the evening. This resulted in Sutton and Cheam having 4 tph all day, but Carshalton, Hackbridge and Mitcham continued with just 2 tph all day
- Norbury line: The daytime pattern and timings of services (i.e. two tph calling at all stations and two tph serving all stations except Wandsworth Common and Battersea Park) was extended into the evenings, resulting in most intermediate stations on the route connected by four tph all day
- 18:33 London Victoria to Selhurst was extended to Sutton
- Additional late night train was introduced from London Victoria:
 - 00:34 from London Victoria to Sutton via Norbury (arriving Sutton at 01:16)

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

What changed in December 2010? (3) Sunday

- Hackbridge line: During the period of day between early morning and early evening, the service frequency between London Victoria and Epsom was increased, from 2 tph to 4 tph. This resulted in almost all intermediate stations being connected by 4 tph at (almost) regular 15-minute intervals

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Monday to Friday in more detail (1): Overview

- During the evenings (from about 19:30 to 23:00) the service frequency between London Victoria and Epsom via Hackbridge was increased from two tph to four tph
 - This new enhanced regular-interval service is most welcome
 - Mitcham, Hackbridge, Carshalton, Sutton and Cheam are now much closer in time to central London, and to each other, and to key interchanges with the Northern Line at Balham, London Tramlink at Mitcham Junction, South West Trains services at Epsom, and with South West Trains and London Overground services at Clapham Junction
 - Would like to see this level of service operate all day too, with service levels boosted further at peak times.

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Monday to Friday in more detail (2): Timetable extract

London Victoria (VIC) towards Sutton (SUO) - Hackbridge (HCB) line:
mid-afternoon (15:00) to mid-evening (22:00) Monday to Friday (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
15:01	14	CLJ only	15:28	9	27
15:17	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	15:49	21	32
15:31	14	CLJ only	15:58	9	27
15:47	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	16:19	21	32
16:01	14	CLJ, MIJ only	16:29	10	28
16:17	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	16:49	20	32
16:31	14	All stations except BAK, WSW, BAL	17:03	14	32
16:50	19	All stations except BAK, WSW	17:21	18	31
17:20	30	All stations except BAK, WSW	17:51	30	31
17:31	11	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:03	12	32
17:50	19	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:21	18	31
18:01	11	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:36	15	35
18:20	19	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:51	15	31
18:50	30	All stations except BAK, WSW	19:21	30	31
19:20	30	All stations except BAK, WSW	19:51	30	31
19:34	14	All stations except BAK, WSW	20:09	18	35
19:50	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	20:21	12	31
20:03	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	20:40	19	37
20:20	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	20:51	11	31
20:33	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	21:12	21	39
20:50	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	21:21	9	31
21:03	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	21:36	15	33
21:20	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	21:51	15	31
21:33	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	22:05	14	32
21:50	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	22:21	16	31

Key

 New services

Typical inter-peak service pattern

Inconsistent stopping pattern;
Regularity on departure from Victoria,
but not on arrival at Sutton;
Most intermediate stations still two tph

PM peak service (16:00-18:59)

Typically fewer tph than off-peak;
Generally irregular departure times;
Up to 30 minutes between trains;
Some inconsistency in stopping
patterns

Mid-evening service pattern

A more frequent service but not until
around 19:20;
Prior to 21:00 some extended journey
times and irregularity in service
interval

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Monday to Friday in more detail (3): Timetable extract

London Victoria (VIC) towards Sutton (SUO) - Hackbridge (HCB) line:
mid-evening (21:00) to last train Monday to Friday (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
21:03	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	21:36	15	33
21:20	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	21:51	15	31
21:33	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	22:05	14	32
21:50	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	22:21	16	31
22:03	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	22:35	14	32
22:20	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	22:51	16	31
22:33	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	23:05	14	32
22:50	17	All stations except BAK, WSW	23:20	15	30
23:03	13	All stations except BAK, WSW	23:35	15	32
23:26	23	All stations except BAK, WSW	23:59	24	33
00:22	54	All stations except BAK, WSW	00:51	52	31

Key

	New services Monday to Friday
	New service on Friday night (Saturday morning) only

Mid to late evening service pattern

Consistent stopping pattern, serving most intermediate stations;
Regularity on departure from Victoria, and on arrival at Sutton;
Four tph but only until about 23:00 which is at the height of London's third rush-hour;
A late night service has been provided on this route on Friday night/Saturday morning (but not Saturday night/Sunday morning – see below)

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Monday to Friday in more detail (4): Timetable extract

London Victoria (VIC) towards Sutton (SUO) - Norbury (NRB) line: mid-evening (21:00) to last train Monday to Thursday (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
21:00	30	All stations	21:44	30	44
21:30	30	All stations	22:14	30	44
22:00	30	All stations	22:44	30	44
22:30	30	All stations	23:14	30	44
23:00	30	All stations	23:44	30	44
23:34	34	All stations	00:16	32	42
23:51	17	All stations	00:33	17	42

Mid to late evening service pattern
Consistent stopping pattern, and regularity of service (until last train), but only two tph;
Better outcome if last train (23:51) was re-timed to 23:59, as on Friday evening, for consistency (see below)

London Victoria (VIC) towards Sutton (SUO) - Norbury (NRB) line: mid-evening (21:00) to last train Friday evening only (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
21:00	30	All stations	21:44	30	44
21:30	30	All stations	22:14	30	44
22:00	30	All stations	22:44	30	44
22:30	30	All stations	23:14	30	44
23:00	30	All stations	23:44	30	44
23:34	34	All stations	00:16	32	42
23:59	25	All stations	00:43	27	44
00:34	35	All stations	01:16	33	42

Key

	Re-timed 23:51 Monday to Thursday service on Friday evenings
	New service Friday night (Saturday morning)

Last trains of the evening
Re-timing of the 23:51 to 23:59 provides a better distribution in service times, in relation to both the preceding and following services, although is inconsistent with the rest of the week;
The additional last train at 00:34 on Friday night also operates on Saturday evenings (unlike the service on the Hackbridge route)

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Monday to Friday in more detail (5): Timetable extract

Sutton (SUO) towards London Victoria (VIC) - Hackbridge (HCB) line:
mid-afternoon (16:00) to last train (23:06) Monday to Friday (December 2010)

SUO dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	VIC arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
16:00	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	16:30	10	30
16:23	23	CLJ only	16:48	18	25
16:30	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	17:00	12	30
16:53	23	CLJ only	17:18	18	25
17:00	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	17:30	12	30
17:30	30	All stations except WSW, BAK	18:00	30	30
18:00	30	All stations except WSW, BAK	18:33	33	33
18:30	30	All stations except WSW, BAK	19:01	28	31
19:00	30	All stations except WSW, BAK	19:30	29	30
19:22	22	All stations except WSW, BAK	19:55	25	33
19:56	34	All stations except WSW, BAK	20:30	35	34
20:25	29	All stations except WSW, BAK	20:56	26	31
20:36	11	All stations except WSW, BAK	21:09	13	33
20:55	19	All stations except WSW, BAK	21:26	17	31
21:06	11	All stations except WSW, BAK	21:39	13	33
21:25	19	All stations except WSW, BAK	21:57	18	32
21:35	10	All stations except WSW, BAK	22:09	12	34
21:55	20	All stations except WSW, BAK	22:27	18	32
22:06	11	All stations except WSW, BAK	22:39	12	33
22:25	19	All stations except WSW, BAK	22:56	17	31
22:36	11	All stations except WSW, BAK	23:09	13	33
22:55	19	All stations except WSW, BAK	23:27	18	32
23:06	11	All stations except WSW, BAK	23:39	12	33

Key

 New services

Typical inter-peak service pattern

Inconsistent stopping pattern
Irregularity on departure, and on arrival
Intermediate stations still two tph

PM peak service (1600-1859)

A reduction in the number of services after 17:00 from four tph to two tph
Typically 30 minutes between trains

Mid-evening service pattern

A more frequent service, but not until after 20:25,
Irregular service interval;
All new services originate from Epsom, but one, the 21:35 from Sutton does not serve Ewell East and Cheam;
A later last train – but still relatively early

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Saturday in more detail (1): overview

- Hackbridge line: Between London Victoria and Epsom the daytime pattern and timings of services (i.e. two tph semi-fast, and two tph serving most intermediate stations) was extended into the evening, resulting in some stations on the route (e.g. Cheam, Sutton and Clapham Junction) connected by four tph all day, but with most stations (Carshalton, Hackbridge, Mitcham Junction, Mitcham Eastfields) by two tph
- This is an improvement on the previous schedule, but...
 - Most intermediate stations still only have two tph serving the entire route
 - There is now arguably a better service for passengers travelling between London Victoria and Sutton during the early evening on Saturdays than there is during the early evening peak on Monday to Fridays

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Saturday in more detail (2): Timetable extract

London Victoria (VIV) towards Sutton (SUO) - Hackbridge (HCB) line:

All-day Saturday (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
06:47	-	All stations except BAK, WSW	07:19	-	32
07:17	30	All stations except BAK, WSW	07:49	30	32
07:31	14	CLJ only	07:58	9	27
07:47	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	08:19	21	32
08:01	14	CLJ only	08:28	9	27
08:17	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	08:49	21	32
08:31	14	CLJ only	08:58	9	27
08:47	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	09:19	21	32
At the same minutes past each hour...					
18:01	14	CLJ only	18:28	9	27
18:17	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:49	21	32
18:31	14	CLJ only	18:58	9	27
18:47	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	19:19	21	32
19:01	14	CLJ only	19:28	9	27
19:17	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	19:49	21	32
19:31	14	CLJ only	19:58	9	27
19:47	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	20:19	21	32
At the same minutes past each hour...					
23:01	14	CLJ only	23:28	9	27
23:26	25	All stations except BAK, WSW	23:59	21	33

Key

 New services

Daytime service pattern

Inconsistent stopping pattern;
Regularity on departure from Victoria,
but not on arrival at Sutton;
Most intermediate stations still two tph

Enhanced evening service

Increased frequency after 18:30
Inconsistent stopping pattern;
Regularity on departure from Victoria,
but not on arrival at Sutton;
Most intermediate stations still two tph

Late-evening service pattern

Last train continues as 23:26 (unlike
Friday evening/Saturday morning
when new later train runs at 00:20)

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Saturday in more detail (3): Comparing Sat with M-F

Monday to Friday: London Victoria (VIC) towards Sutton (SUO) - Hackbridge line:

17:00-18:59 Monday to Friday (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
17:20	30	All stations except BAK, WSW	17:51	30	31
17:31	11	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:03	12	32
17:50	19	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:21	18	31
18:01	11	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:36	15	35
18:20	19	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:51	15	31
18:50	30	All stations except BAK, WSW	19:21	30	31

PM-peak service pattern

Six services in a two-hour period;
Up to 30 minutes between services;
Poor temporal distribution;
Most intermediate stations receiving three tph

Saturday: London Victoria (VIC) towards Sutton (SUO) - Hackbridge line:

17:00-18:59 Saturday (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
17:01	14	CLJ only	17:28	9	27
17:17	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	17:49	21	32
17:31	14	CLJ only	17:58	9	27
17:47	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:19	21	32
18:01	14	CLJ only	18:28	9	27
18:17	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:49	21	32
18:31	14	CLJ only	18:58	9	27
18:47	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	19:19	21	32

Saturday service pattern

Eight services in a two-hour period;
Inconsistent stopping pattern;
Regularity on departure, but not on arrival;
Most intermediate stations receiving only two tph

Key

 New service

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Saturday in more detail (4): Timetable extract

Sutton (SUO) towards London Victoria (VIC) - Hackbridge (HCB) line:

All-day Saturday (December 2010)

SUO dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	VIC arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
06:53	-	CLJ only	07:18	-	25
07:00	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	07:30	12	30
07:23	23	CLJ only	07:48	18	25
07:30	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	08:00	12	30
07:53	23	CLJ only	08:18	18	26
At the same minutes past each hour					
19:00	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	19:30	12	30
19:23	23	CLJ only	19:48	18	25
19:30	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	20:00	12	30
19:53	23	CLJ only	20:18	18	25
At the same minutes past each hour					
22:00	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	22:30	12	30
22:23	23	CLJ only	22:48	18	25
22:30	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	23:00	12	30
22:53	23	CLJ only	23:22	22	29
23:00	7	All stations except WSW, BAK	23:31	9	31

Key

 New services

Daytime service pattern

Inconsistent stopping pattern;
Irregular service interval on departure from Sutton, and on arrival at Victoria;
Most intermediate stations still two tph

Enhanced evening service

Increased frequency after 19:00
Inconsistent stopping pattern;
Regularity on departure from Victoria, but not on arrival at Sutton;
Most intermediate stations still two tph

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Sunday in more detail (1): overview

- Hackbridge line: The service frequency between London Victoria and Epsom was increased in the period between early morning and early evening from 2 tph to 4 tph with most intermediate stations receiving the same level of service
- This is a great improvement on the previous schedule, but...
 - The enhanced service level only operates until around 18:00 on services from London Victoria towards Epsom

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Sunday in more detail (2): Timetable extract

London Victoria (VIC) towards Sutton (SUO) - Hackbridge (HCB) line:
All-day Sunday (December 2010)

VIC dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	SUO arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
07:22	-	All stations except BAK, WSW	07:52	-	30
07:52	30	All stations except BAK, WSW	08:22	30	30
08:08	16	All stations	08:41	19	33
08:22	14	All stations except BAK, WSW	08:52	11	30
08:38	16	All stations	09:10	18	32
08:52	14	All stations except BAK, WSW	09:22	12	30
At the same minutes past each hour...					
17:08	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	17:40	18	32
17:22	14	All stations	17:52	12	30
17:38	14	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:10	18	32
17:52	16	All stations except BAK, WSW	18:22	12	30
18:08	16	All stations	18:40	18	32
18:38	30	All stations	19:10	30	32
At the same minutes past each hour...					
23:08	30	All stations			32

Key

New services

Enhanced daytime service pattern (07:52-18:08)

Most intermediate stations four tph;
Good temporal distribution on departure times from Sutton

Evening service

Frequency reverts to two tph arguably too early in the evening

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Sunday in more detail (3): Timetable extract

Sutton (SUO) towards London Victoria (VIC) - Hackbridge line:

All-day Sunday (December 2010)

SUO dept	Departure interval (mins)	Stopping pattern	VIC arr.	Arrival interval (mins)	Journey time (mins)
07:28	-	All stations except WSW, BAK	07:59	-	31
07:43	15	All stations	08:15	16	32
07:58	15	All stations except WSW, BAK	08:29	14	31
08:13	15	All stations	08:45	16	32
08:28	15	All stations except WSW, BAK	08:59	14	31
08:43	15	All stations	09:15	16	32
08:58	15	All stations except WSW, BAK	09:29	14	31
At the same minutes past each hour					
18:13	15	All stations	18:45	16	32
18:28	15	All stations except WSW, BAK	18:59	14	31
18:43	15	All stations	19:15	16	32
18:58	15	All stations except WSW, BAK	19:29	14	31
At the same minutes past each hour					
19:13	15	All stations	19:45	16	32
19:43	30	All stations	20:15	30	32
At the same minutes past each hour					
23:13	30	All stations	23:45	30	32
23:43	30	All stations	00:15	30	32

Key

 New services

Enhanced daytime service pattern (07:29-19:13)

Good temporal distribution on departure from Sutton and arrival at Victoria;

Most intermediate stations four tph; Would like all services to call at all stations (note the one-minute difference in journey duration between those services that stop and those that do not)

Evening service

Ideally the 15-minute interval service would continue through the evening, although in this direction towards Victoria the enhanced service does operate until 19:00;

Would like to see the last train on the other days of the week departure at around the same time as on Sundays

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Review (1)

- Changes introduced in the December 2010 timetable are an improvement on the previous schedule, however...
- No additional services (or significant changes to services) were introduced either at peak times or during the inter-peak
- The situation whereby fewer services operate between London Victoria and Sutton during some of the peak period hours than during most other hours of the day continues
- The six new additional services that operate from Epsom towards London Victoria on the Hackbridge line during the mid to late evening period Monday to Friday result in four tph at most stations on the route. But the new services have been scheduled with poor temporal distribution, offering intervals of around 11 and 19 minutes between trains

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Review (2)

- The eight¹ new additional services that operate from London Victoria towards Epsom on the Hackbridge line during the mid to late evening period on Monday to Friday result in four tph at most stations on the route. Although the scheduling of the new services provides intervals of around 17 and 13 minutes between trains from London Victoria, some of the new services (especially in the early evening) have journey times to Sutton that are up to eight minutes longer in duration (equivalent to around 25%) than a typical journey time on the route
- Inter-peak services continue to have inconsistent stopping patterns, resulting in Mitcham Eastfields (the station with the fastest growth), Mitcham Junction (interchange with London Tramlink), Hackbridge (sustainable suburb) and Carshalton all continuing to just have two tph to Balham (interchange with Northern Line), Clapham Junction (South West Trains, London Overground and other Southern services) and London Victoria (interchange with Circle, District and Victoria Lines, and Cycle-hire docking stations)
- More consistency with timings of late night services from London Victoria across the week would be welcome

¹ Nine on Fridays

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Review (3)

- The new additional Saturday evening services for the Hackbridge route are welcome. However, the enhancement has been provided by continuing the arguably less than perfect daytime service of operation into the evening. SRUF would like to see a full recast of the timetable across the network so that these additional services could provide potentially greater benefit to a larger number of suburban stations
- The extra Saturday evening services on the Norbury line are also a welcome addition. However, again 4 tph does not equate to a regular 15-minute service interval and trains operate with 7 and 23-minute intervals towards London Victoria and 10 and 20-minute intervals towards Sutton.
- Nevertheless, it is recognised that a more consistent timetable is now provided across the whole day on Saturdays
- Additional late evening services on the Hackbridge line on Saturdays would be welcome

Southern timetable enhancements December 2010

Review (4)

- The introduction on Sundays of an additional half-hourly stopping service between London Victoria and Epsom, to complement the previous half-hourly stopping service, is a major improvement. With the additional services scheduled to provide 4 tph at regular 15-minute intervals from Epsom towards London Victoria, and 4 tph at 14 and 16-minute intervals in the opposite direction, this is arguably the best enhancement to services in the Sutton area across the week.
- However, it is disappointing that the enhanced level of service does not continue later into the evening. It is likely that demand for travel on Sundays is greater at 19:00 than it is at 08:00
- Ideally all four trains would call at Wandsworth Common and Battersea Park. Although this would add two or three minutes to the overall journey time, it would provide a more consistent timetable and improve the routes marketability.
- The additional services have resulted in improved connectivity with South West Trains services at Epsom on Sundays. Prior to December 2010 journeys between Sutton and Guildford required a 17-minute interchange at Epsom, this is now just 5 minutes.

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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (1)

If there is a choice between either providing a service that operates at regular intervals, at a high-frequency and with a consistent stopping pattern, or a service that runs at irregular intervals, at low-frequency and with differing calling points between trains, what is best?

Well, this depends on a number of factors including the type of route and the distances involved. Nevertheless, there are a number of indicators..

- Research commissioned by the DfT in an 'On-line citizens' panel' (GfK, 2008) has shown that reliability and regularity are high priorities for a transport system, with much lower priority given to improving journey times.
- Research commissioned by Passenger Focus (by MVA, 2010, and reported in 'Passengers' priorities for improvements in rail services') has shown that commuters, in general, were satisfied with the length of time their journey took, but “placed improvements to 'sufficient train services at the time I use them' above punctuality”.

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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (2)

Consider the suburban journey between Sutton and London Victoria, and the time taken by different modes:

- By rail, via Hackbridge, a distance of 12 miles (19 km), a semi-fast service is scheduled to take around 25 minutes
- By rail, via Hackbridge, services that call all intermediate stations take around 32 minutes
- By road, a distance of 13 miles (21 km), the journey takes nominally 49 minutes

When comparing 'on-board' journey times, rail clearly has the advantage over private transport (and there are no problems associated with parking)....

...but travel by car can be made at any time of course, whereas travel by train includes an element of 'waiting time'.

Therefore, a more attractive proposition for rail could be to attempt to reduce the 'waiting time' element of the journey, even if, by doing so, this increased the 'on-board' time a little.

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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (3)

... and increasing the 'on-board' journey time to achieve this aim is perhaps not so bad, provided it is still means the rail journey is a lot quicker than it would be to drive.



Price Comparison

TESCO	68p
ASDA	68p
Sainsbury's	69p any 3 FOR £1.50 - Valid until: 08/11/2011
ocado	69p

Information provided by mysupermarket.co.uk
(17 October 2011)

Consider the analogy where four grocers sell the same product. If one sold the product at a lower price than any of its competitors, is it likely to reduce the price of the product further still?.....

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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (4)

...probably not. But to ensure they had the edge on their competitors, and in order to boost sales, they may endeavour to market the product more dynamically, place it in a more prominent position in the store, or improve its branding.

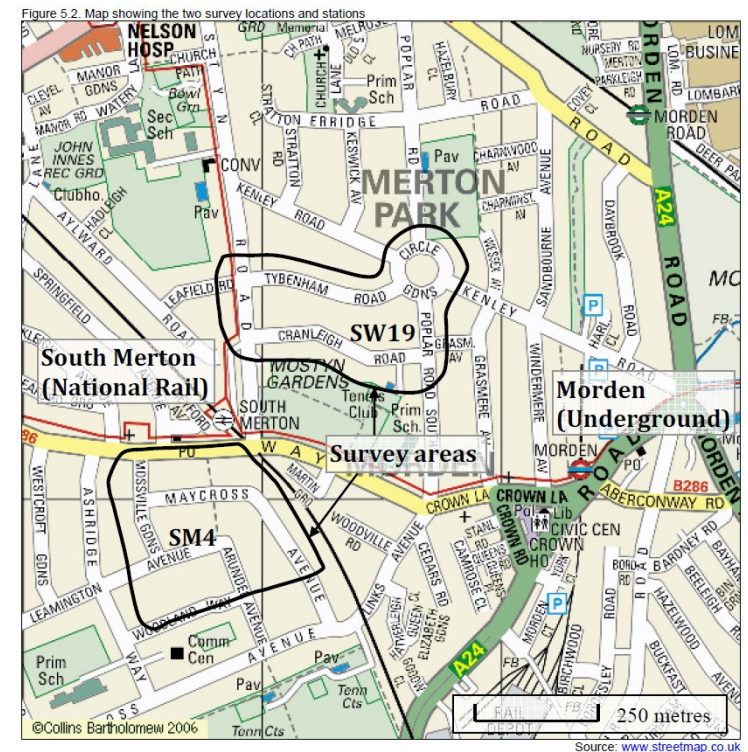


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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (5)

...and so, like the grocer knowing that he needs not reduce the price of a can of beans further to actually sell the product, Southern could perhaps provide a more compelling product by regularising the service between Sutton and London Victoria. Four tph at regular 15-minute intervals, each of which take 32 minutes to complete the journey (still a lot quicker than driving), could be a more attractive product than what is currently on offer of four tph at 23 and 7-minute intervals and which are not that much quicker anyway!

....and, again, research has shown that inter-peak trip-rates for high-frequency Underground services can be of the order of three times those of low-frequency National Rail services in broadly similar suburban areas (see, for example, “A study comparing per-capita trip rates between surface rail and the Underground”, Charles Martin (2008) unpublished)



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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (6)

Some other considerations - for example, is 32 minutes too long for a journey between Sutton and London Victoria?:

- The 32-minute 'on-board' journey time for a stopping, all stations, train between Sutton and London Victoria, which corresponds to an average speed of 22 mph (35 kph), compares well other journeys by public transport:
 - Underground (Northern Line): Morden to London Bridge 18 mph (29 kph)
 - Bus (213/X26): Sutton to Kingston, at best 14 mph (23 kph)
 - Bus (280): Sutton to Tooting Broadway 9 mph (14 kph)
- There are 108 semi-fast services from Sutton to London Victoria each week. This represents 29% of the total number of services from Sutton to London Victoria on the Hackbridge line (368), or just 11% of the total number of departures to London Victoria (all routes) each week (984)
- Without the semi-fast service, passengers travelling between London Victoria and Sutton and all stations between Cheam, Dorking and Horsham on a direct train would see their typical journey time increase by around 7 minutes. This equates to an increase of 28% from Sutton, 13% from Dorking or 9% from Horsham. However,...

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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (7)

- For passengers at Epsom and stations to Horsham there are alternative routes available. For example, the scheduled journey time from Dorking to Clapham Junction on the 'semi-fast' direct Southern service via Sutton is 44 minutes. But an alternative 'stopping' direct South West Trains service via Wimbledon is scheduled to complete the journey in just 40 minutes.
- ...and, of course, passengers may actually wish to get to, or from, Mitcham Junction or Balham (possibly using the interchange with Tramlink or the Northern Line or one of the numerous bus routes), and so would value the additional journey opportunities that services that stopped at these stations would provide.
- So, perhaps it's time for the Train Operating Companies and the DfT to get together to discuss what the best options are for the greatest number of existing, and potentially new, passengers....

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Context: Trading journey time for service frequency (8)

...because at the moment, although the intentions behind the South Central Franchise Service Level Commitment (essentially to ensure that the franchisee does not cut service levels) are good, it perhaps does not allow the train operator sufficient flexibility to enable them to deliver a service that meets the expectations of the growing number of today's rail travellers. And given the constraints on capacity due to infrastructure limitations, trade-offs, inevitably, need to be reached (at least in the short term). A service level commitment that is too rigid, and harks back to a former era, may stifle, rather than enable, those compromises.

And finally, it is interesting to note in paragraph 1.2 of the Service Level Commitment, that, "Limited Stops may be made at Mitcham Eastfields".....and talking about former eras and Mitcham Eastfields.....

Section 6 – South London Lines

Route K LONDON VICTORIA – HORSHAM via Hackbridge, Epsom and Dorking (semi-fast)

1. Route Definition

- 1.1 Services shall be provided between London Victoria and Horsham, calling at Clapham Junction, Sutton (Surrey), Cheam, Ewell East, Epsom, Ashtead, Leatherhead, Boxhill & Westhumble, Dorking, Holmwood, Ockley and Warnham.
- 1.2 Limited Stops may be made at Mitcham Eastfields

2. Service Pattern – Mondays to Fridays

Core Service Specification

- 2.1 Between and including the Early and Late Services, two services per hour shall be provided at half-hourly intervals between London Victoria and Dorking, calling at the stations specified in Paragraph 1.1 except at Ewell East and Boxhill & Westhumble, provided that the service specified in Paragraph 2.2 calls at these stations.
- 2.2 One of these services in each hour shall be extended to terminate at or originate from Horsham, calling at the stations specified in Paragraph 1.1.

Additional Services and Variations

Towards Dorking and Horsham

- 2.3 Between 0545 and 0759, four additional services shall be provided at intervals not exceeding 50 minutes from London Victoria to Horsham, calling at the stations specified in Paragraph 1.1. The first three of these services shall also call at Balham, Mitcham Junction, Hackbridge and Carshalton.

Extract from "South Central Franchise Service Level Commitment 1" (September 2009) DfT

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Will Hay in "Oh, Mr. Porter!"
A Gainsborough Picture (1937)
Directed by Marcel Varnel,
with Will Hay, Graham Moffat, Moore Marriott



Albert: "Cor, you won't half cop-it for stopping a train for no reason!"
Will: "Mind your own business. I'm the station master here. And if I want a train to stop, it stops!"

A tenuous link perhaps, but the great Will Hay (1888-1949) is laid to rest in Streatham Park Cemetery.....just ten minutes walk from Mitcham Eastfields station (where some trains that could stop, don't stop (yet))!

sruf.org.uk

Sutton Rail Users' Forum

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Thank you for listening! Any comments and questions much appreciated.