



James Duddridge MP
House of Commons
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Dear James,

New c2c timetable

Now we have reached the end of the first week of the new c2c timetable, I wanted to provide you with an overview of how the timetable has settled, and what we expect will happen next. I know you have been abroad this week, but that you and your office have been following this issue closely.

We have seen significant progress through the week. Monday was a difficult commute for the majority of our customers, as everyone was adapting to a new timetable that had never been used before. By Wednesday, there was a clear difference in the passenger loadings of each train as passengers adjusted their behaviour to find the service that suits them best, and this pattern has continued.

I do not believe that this shift in passenger numbers has fully settled yet, and in particular the morning peak seems to have settled more swiftly than the evening service. I anticipate that we will continue to see people's travel habits change through the first week or two in January before we can get an accurate overview.

I know the issue of stopping trains in London has concerned you throughout this process, and after a few days we found that the balance had indeed swung slightly too far. The result was that we were not only successfully providing capacity for our existing passengers, but also attracting simply too many new passengers off District Line trains. This was making some individual services over-crowded as a result, which we could not allow to continue.

Having heard the feedback from passengers, and reviewed the data on each individual train, we were able to identify which services needed to change from Thursday. An additional three AM peak services from your constituency no longer stop at Barking: the 07.02, 07.34 and 07.48 departures from Shoeburyness. Likewise, in the evening the 18.34 service from Fenchurch Street to Shoeburyness via Laindon no longer calls at West Ham to avoid overcrowding.

From an operational perspective, I am pleased to say that the timetable has settled very swiftly. On Monday our punctuality was 89.7%, which was not unexpected for the first day. By Thursday this had climbed to 97.2%, which is in line with our long-term average punctuality. This morning (Friday), 100% of trains arrived during the morning peak.

I am sure you will have had contact from some constituents about the new timetable, and especially the service at the start of the week. You will know how much I hate the thought that we have upset some of our passengers. A lot of people have been or will be able to adjust their commute, which benefits both themselves and the other passengers around them. However, we know that we will not be able to make every passenger happy, and some will remain less satisfied with their new commute than the previous timetable.

In particular, we do expect that Monday 4 January and the first few days of that week will see some upheaval, as passengers return from the Christmas break and re-adjust to the changed timetable.

My promise to all our passengers has been that we will continue to listen, and to act where necessary. We have been collating feedback from our passengers throughout to help inform this process. Shana Doherty and the Southend Rail Travellers' Association have both been providing helpful feedback directly and from fellow passengers. I would also value your input too.

I hope the agility we have shown in adjusting the timetable so far demonstrates that we are intent on finding the right balance between the different demands that we have to manage. From our past conversations I know you are aware how passionately we feel about our passengers, and we remain determined to provide the best possible service across the route.

If I do not speak to you in advance, I would also like to take this opportunity to wish you a very Merry Christmas.

With best wishes

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Julian', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Julian Drury
Managing Director, c2c Rail