

- 0648 Margate to St Pancras will run earlier and no longer attach at Ashford to the Sandwich portion. This will depart from Ashford at 0735 and run as a 12 car from throughout from Margate. This also offers a reduction in journey time of 4 minutes. Canterbury to London is achieved in 55 minutes.
- 0550 Sandwich to St Pancras will start from Dover at 0612 and will no longer serve Sandwich and Deal
- The 0650 Sandwich to Ashford will extend to St Pancras, no longer attaching at Ashford, departing Ashford at 0745. This also provides a service from Ashford to Ebbsfleet during the morning peak.
- 0742 Dover to St Pancras will start back from Sandwich at 0720 stopping at Deal at 0726
- This will provide an extra six carriages of capacity from Ashford to St Pancras at the busiest time in the morning peak period.

Evening

- 1642 St Pancras to Margate strengthened to 12 cars
- 1725 & 1755 St Pancras to Broadstairs cease to call at Ebbsfleet. Loss of through service from Ebbsfleet to Medway
- 1714, 1744 & 1814 St Pancras to Maidstone West will start earlier and call additionally at Ebbsfleet, offering new journey opportunities from Ebbsfleet to Maidstone
- 1810 St Pancras to Margate & Dover to run as a 12 car to Margate, cutting journey times to from St Pancras to Canterbury to 55 minutes
- 1818 St Pancras to Ebbsfleet is extended to Dover. The combination of this and the above offers an additional six cars of capacity to Ashford and a service from Ebbsfleet to Ashford in the evening peak
- The remaining services from St Pancras to Ebbsfleet retimed to provide a better spread of trains from London to Ebbsfleet
- 2312 St Pancras – Dover is extended to Ramsgate stopping at Deal and Sandwich

Chatham Mainline

Following calls from stakeholders in Kent for improved journey times and faster services from the Kent coast to London we propose to change the off peak timetable on the Chatham Mainline in order to better meet the needs of passengers. This will be achieved by having one fast train per hour between Victoria and Ramsgate and concentrating the smaller stations onto one train. These proposals reduce Longfield and Meopham from three trains per hour to two.

The proposed changes are as follows:

- One train per hour (TPH) Fast Victoria to Ramsgate / Dover. Will run fast between Bromley South and Rochester and also omit Newington & Teynham.
 - One TPH Semi Fast Victoria to Ramsgate / Dover. Will also call at Longfield, Meopham, Newington & Teynham
 - Two TPH St Pancras to Faversham as now
 - One TPH Victoria to Gillingham stopping train as now. The number of trains compared to the current timetable remains unchanged. This will result in shorter journey times, 44 minutes from Victoria to Chatham (currently 49 minutes), one hour and nine minutes from Victoria to Faversham (currently one hour 17 minutes) and one hour 51 minutes from Victoria to Ramsgate (currently one hour 59 minutes).
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2. The Kent County Council response to the consultation

KENT COUNTY COUNCIL RESPONSE TO PROPOSED CHANGES TO DECEMBER 2012 TIMETABLE

Kent County Council strongly supports the proposed changes to High Speed and Maidstone East line timetables from December 2012. These changes also represent the early delivery of some of the key outcomes recommended in our Rail Action Plan for Kent, which will be welcomed by large numbers of passengers.

The High Speed changes reflect the agreement we have already reached in respect of High Speed services to Deal and Sandwich, as well as delivering other improvements and faster journey times from the principal High Speed routes via Ashford. We especially welcome the additional capacity in the AM and PM peaks, with consequent reduction in journey times between St Pancras and Canterbury West as well as both Folkestone stations.

We also welcome the proposed improvement to the off-peak journey time between Ramsgate and Victoria via the North Kent line, which delivers the aspirations of the North Kent Rail Users Group who have advocated this change for some time. Kent County Council strongly supports this proposed change, which will deliver better connectivity between Thanet, North Kent, Medway and London during the off-peak period. We do not accept that the consequent reduction in the off-peak service from 3tph to 2tph at Longfield and Meopham is a reason for not delivering this change, as both these stations would continue to enjoy a faster overall off-peak service than that which existed prior to December 2009.

The proposed changes to the Maidstone East line are welcomed because they introduce connectivity between this line and all the other lines serving Ashford. While not every train can connect with every other train, there is a significant overall improvement in connectivity between the Maidstone East line and services to Canterbury, Thanet, Folkestone, Dover, Hastings and Brighton in both directions. This is exactly the sort of improvement that rail timetables should deliver, and as another key outcome in our Rail Action Plan for Kent it is one that we strongly support.

Recommendations

- 1. For Members to note the report and consider making a consultation response on behalf of Swale JTB.**

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The full series of consultation documents may viewed via the link as below.

<http://www.southeasternrailway.co.uk/news/latest-news/december-2012-timetable-consultation-begins/>