

The Combined Franchise Replacement Sponsor
Department for Transport
Zone 3/15
Great Minster House
33 Horseferry Road
London SW1P 4DR

Tel No:
Ask for: Hannah Gooden
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Date: 22 August 2012

Dear Sir / Madam

Consultation on the combined Thameslink, Southern and Great Northern Franchise

Thank you for consulting Sevenoaks District Council on the above franchise renewal.

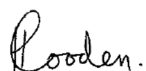
The Council convened a rail user forum meeting on 21 August, which included representatives from Sevenoaks Rail Travellers Association, Edenbridge and District Rail Travellers Association and Tonbridge Line Commuters, who have contributed to this response (and who will also be responding via their own organisations).

In summary, local stakeholders consider that current services run punctually and smoothly under normal circumstances, however there are serious concerns regarding the ability of the franchise to deal effectively with disruptions whether planned or unplanned. The forthcoming redevelopment of London Bridge and the associated disruptions to services is a major concern. At times when the service is disrupted, the situation is exacerbated by very poor communication with passengers. This lack of information and communication is considered to be one of the most important issues that needs to be addressed in the future.

The inclusion of direct services from Kent to Gatwick is also considered a priority and overcrowding of peak-time services and fare increases were also raised as issues that need to be addressed.

Please find attached a response schedule which sets out responses to the questions raised in the consultation. Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have any queries in relation to the Council's response to this consultation.

Yours faithfully



Hannah Gooden
Planning Policy Team Leader, Sevenoaks District Council