



Dear Sirs

## **Timetable 2018: Submission by APTU (The Association of Public Transport Users)**

APTU (The Association of Public Transport Users) is the rail user group for passengers between West Hampstead Thameslink and Harlington inclusive. Our response has been informed by prior feedback from our members on the issues that matter to them.

### **Monday to Friday timetable**

1. **(Like): Capacity Increase:** We welcome the noticeable increase in capacity offered by the new timetable and believe this to be an important step forward.
2. **(Like): Off Peak Service frequency increase:** We welcome the increase in the off-peak service from 4 to 6 trains per hour through provision of the Luton, all stations to Mill Hill Broadway, West Hampstead Thameslink, St Pancras and stations to Rainham service.
3. **(Like): Late evening northbound service:** We welcome the extension of the service by around 45 minutes in the evening – with 6 trains per hour ('tph') service until 22:13 and 4tph until 22:51.
4. **(Dislike): St Albans to St Pancras journey time / Non Stop trains:** Attention should be given to reducing the extension in journey times between St Albans and St Pancras for trains that run non-stop – there is around a 5 minute average increase.
  - a. We acknowledge that the problem is at its worst for journeys to St Pancras (as compared to Farringdon to Blackfriars inclusive).
  - b. Class 700 trains accelerate fast, brake quickly and have larger doors and other features designed to speed boarding / disembarkation. In setting the running times, this should be fully allowed for.
  - c. We understand that East Midlands Trains have accepted the principle that in the southbound direction Thameslink trains will have priority and this is another reason not to allow excessive recovery times.
  - d. There should be a commitment to review required journey times after 12 months operations in order to determine possible journey speed ups.

This change applies through the day and also impacts Harlington, Leagrave, Luton, Luton Airport Parkway and Harpenden.

5. **(Dislike): St Albans to St Pancras journey time / Four Stop trains:** Attention should be given to eliminating / reducing the extended journey times between St Albans and St Pancras for trains that stop at Radlett, Elstree & Borehamwood, Mill Hill Broadway and West Hampstead Thameslink.
6. **(Like): St Pancras to St Albans journey time / Non Stop trains:** We welcome the reduction in journey times in the evening peak and believe these should be retained – around 2 minutes for Blackfriars to St Albans and 1 minute for St Pancras to St Albans. This change also impacts Harlington, Leagrave, Luton, Luton Airport Parkway and Harpenden.
7. **(Dislike): West Hampstead stops on fast services.** More stops should be provided in peak shoulder hours here for trains that would otherwise run non-stop St Pancras – St Albans (or the reverse). In particular:
  - a. There should be a southbound stop around 09:30am.
  - b. Northbound stopping should happen substantially earlier than 20:30. They start again at 18:27 at present, and we believe this should be the target. We accept the increase in services might make this not possible, but a restart around 19:00 requires serious consideration.

This change also impacts Harlington, Leagrave, Luton, Luton Airport Parkway and Harpenden.

8. **(Dislike): Gaps in early morning stops at Harlington & Leagrave.** We note that the service interval for Harlington is 24 minutes, 30 minutes and 30 minutes between 05:40 and 07:04 and for Leagrave it is 24 minutes, 22 minutes, 8 minutes and 22 minutes between 05:45 and 07:09. This is an unacceptably large interval and needs reduction – possibly by starting the current 06:25 and 06:55 Luton starters at Bedford or Flitwick (we are sure our colleagues at BCA would prefer Bedford).
9. **(Dislike): Gaps in Cricklewood & Hendon Morning northbound peak calls:** The 30 minute intervals in the northbound service between 08:43 and 09:43 should be eliminated and the standard 15 minute interval service made available.
10. **(Dislike): Gaps in early evening southbound calls at Harlington & Leagrave:** We note intervals of 20 minutes followed by 30 minutes at Harlington between 17:43 and 18:33 and a 20 minute interval at Leagrave between 17:48 and 18:08. It would be good to reduce these gaps as this represents a time when people set out for a night in London and so there should be noticeable demand.
11. **(Dislike): Northbound calls omitted at St Albans in the morning:** We note that four trains do not stop at St Albans. Consideration should be given to including a St Albans stop for these services (St Albans has noticeable numbers of offices and other employment locations) and in addition it delivers service consistency.
12. **(Like): Omitted northbound calls at Harpenden in the morning peak.** We note that services that make limited stops north of St Albans do not stop here, favouring Luton Airport Parkway instead. We believe this is reasonable, but it is important that the service interval for services to Bedford is not allowed to grow beyond 15 minutes (approx).
13. **(Dislike): Northbound All Stations services around Midnight:** We note that there is a 45 minute gap in the All Stations services from St Pancras between 00:18 and 01:01 – The current timetable provides departures at 00:18, 00:34 and 01:18. This gap should be reduced to around 25 – 30 minutes – there are noticeable numbers of late night workers et al facing an extended journey time.
14. **(Dislike): Long Gap in Northbound departures from Luton between 00:32 and 00:12:** We believe there will be noticeable numbers travelling at this time (returning from evening entertainment, evening shifts etc) and a gap of this length is unacceptable. The 00:46 and/or 00:56 services should be extended to Bedford (also serving Leagrave, Harlington and Flitwick).
15. **(Dislike): London Bridge overnight:** We note that services do not stop at London Bridge between 23:30 and 0500 (approx). We assume this is because overnight engineering work closes the line. If this is not the case, or when the line is made available again, then services should stop there.
  - a. Consideration should be given to reducing or eliminating the gap on Thursday and Friday nights and at other times when the night time economy is very active (eg December).

### Other timetable matters

16. **Saturday:** We note that the Saturday service timetable is not yet available. We urge that the full service operates from around 0600 (as now) through to around 22:50 (ie as Monday to Friday).
17. **Sunday:** We note that the Sunday service timetable is not yet available. We urge that the full service operates from around current start times through to around 22:50 (ie as Monday to Friday).
  - a. We note that it is planned that the Luton – Rainham service will run on Sunday and we support this.
  - b. We further note that the all stations service will increase from 2 to 4 trains per hour and support this improvement.
18. **Contingency timetable.** The new timetable will mean that virtually all capacity for St Albans to Luton travellers and all capacity for travellers to Leagrave and north thereof will come from trains that have travelled up the Brighton Mainline from at least as far south as Purley. Failures between Purley and London Bridge will therefore result in severe capacity reduction and detailed work is required to develop a contingency timetable.